JOHN BULL

Vol. I. No. 2. SATURDAY, JUNE 16th, 1906. ONE PENNY.

The world is a bundle of hay;
Mankind are the asses who pull;
Each tugs it a different way,
And the greatest of all is John Bull

—BYRON.

Edited by
HORATIO BOTTOMLEY, M.P.

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C. S. DENNISS,
Secretary and General Manager.

OSWESTRY, MAY, 1906.

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No. 2. Saturday, June 16th, 1906. One Penny.

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THE WEEK.

To our Half Million Readers.

JOHN BULL has indeed caught on—thanks to an indulgent public—and it would be indeed ungracious of us if in this, our second number, we failed to express our thanks and our appreciation. We trust that each succeeding issue may strengthen the bond between our readers and ourselves.

The Studio "Mystery."

The only mystery about this thing is the name of the second victim. If what we hear be true, there is more sympathy due to him than to the dead man. Still, *de mortuis nil*, etc.

Sir Edward Clarke.

Poor Sir Edward! Always in the wars! But there was a very pathetic note in his farewell letter—something about "mental health." Well, he has realised the ambition of his life, by becoming member for the City. But the victory was dearly won. He first came into public notice through the "Penge mystery"—and he has been more or less of a mystery ever since—except to a few.

The Hugh Watt Case.

Hugh Watt must come out of prison. His sentence is one of the monstrosities of recent times. A rat ought not to be killed on such evidence as convicted him—whilst even if technically guilty, his "crime" was the act of an eccentric. Five years' penal servitude! And the jury say they would not have convicted had they not thought that the sentence would have been a purely nominal one. But they did not know Mr. Justice Phillimore. He was the very last Judge who should have tried such a case. Has not "Phillimorality" come to be the recognised description of his *obiter dicta?* Who has forgotten his remarkable outburst soon after he joined the Bench, when, as Vacation Judge, he had to make certain decrees absolute? We say deliberately, first, that the evidence for the prosecution was such that no jury should have convicted, and, secondly, that in any case the sentence was harsh, inhuman, and out of all proportion to the offence, having regard to all the surrounding circumstances. The Home Secretary will be giving expression to the general feeling of the public by at once advising Mr. Watt's release.

"Dissolution Rumours."

It is indeed a strange commentary upon the uncertainty of politics that people should already be discussing the possibility, however remote, of a Spring dissolution. Of course, it is all nonsense. In the event of a deadlock arising over the (so-called) Education Bill, the measure will have to be shelved for a bit and sent up again later on. There are a lot of other things for the Government to do—and nobody wants another General Election just yet. But for this "unholy alliance" between the Government and "the Nonconformist conscience," there would have been no fear of such a contingency; whilst the time that has been wasted in sectarian strife could have been applied to practical legislation. The present leader of the Liberal Party is Dr. Clifford. The sooner Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman takes over the job, the better.

THE WORLD, THE FLESH, AND THE DEVIL.

Charitable Christian Protestants are going about saying that the Anarchist outrage was a judgment upon Queen Ena for changing her religion. But as the outrage failed, Catholics are justified in retorting that she was preserved as a reward for embracing the true faith.

Old women of both sexes in this country declared that her greatest trial in life would be to witness the horrors of a bull-fight. But she is said to have thoroughly enjoyed the national sport, and is now the most popular lady in Spain.

"Lloyd's News" advertises a book containing extracts from the works of "every great writer, living or dead." What an opportunity for a crop of libel actions by omitted scribblers desirous of advertisement. If it was libel to print GUS ELEN in small type, how much more to imply that Guy Boothby and Burnt-cork Shaw, and Filbert Chesterton are not great writers!

In the Woman's Column of the "Star" the other day appeared this advertisement:—

> "Has anyone a simple tested remedy that will remove the craving for strong drink?"

A correspondent suggests Irish whisky. He is evidently a Scotchman.

Why do not some of our contemporaries, by the way, who are always shouting "Protection for our goods" practise a little protection for their readers? We clip the following advertisements from the "Weekly Dispatch":—

> A LADY'S MAID must sell two lovely real 18-carat gold-cased Orient diamond and ruby rings; only 2s. 6d. the two; also lady's long gold-cased watch-guard, with locket attached, 2s. 6d.; approval before payment.—Miss Andrews, The Gables, Ealing Dean, Middlesex.
>
> LADY must sacrifice her 22-carat gold-cased wedding ring and chased keeper, only 3s. the two rings; approval before payment.—Mrs. Proctor, Hill Side House, Nailsea, Somerset.
>
> LADY must sacrifice her 22-carat gold-cased massive wedding ring; also chased keeper, stamped; only 3s. the two; approval before payment; bargain.—Mrs. Wilson, 63, Adelaide Road, West Ealing, London.

These advertisements have also appeared for weeks in other papers. It is obvious that the advertisers are not only willing to "sacrifice" their jewels, but are also spending many times their value in advertising their philanthropic intentions to the world.

Lord Northcliffe, now that we have called his attention to the matter, will doubtless save his readers from being further victimised by such obvious fakes. *Noblesse oblige!*

What special qualifications is it suggested that the members of the Royal Commission on Police Administration possess for their task? They are all lawyers, and are in that sense, if only remotely, related to "The Force." The reference, by the way, is to inquire "into, and report upon, the duties of the Metropolitan Police in dealing with cases of drunkenness, disorder, and solicitation." We cannot imagine any of the Commissioners ever having had the remotest personal experience of drunkenness, or disorder—whilst, having regard to the forbidding countenances of at least some of them, we find it difficult to think that they have ever personally been the victims of solicitation.

There is one view of the Madrid bomb outrage which has escaped attention. How many people remember General Weyler, who had been recalled from Cuba for inhuman cruelty, and was allowed to govern Barcelona by martial law? Do we remember how Weyler's troops swept men, women and children into the prisons at Barcelona, and punished and tortured and murdered the innocent at will on the pretext that they were Anarchists? May not it be possible to connect General Weyler's cruelties with the recent bomb-throwing at Madrid? Was not Mateo Moral, from Barcelona, a Catalan by birth? Who knows whether his sister, or wife, or love was not among Weyler's victims? It is worth thinking about.

We are not quite certain that a friend with whom we were dining the other night at a West End restaurant really appreciated something we said to him. It was the dessert course, and with great ceremony a bottle of port was uncorked, and the host observed, "*This is out of my own cellar.*" We tasted it and remarked, "*We congratulate you.*"

Which reminds us that upon another occasion, being the guests of a very parsimonious host, we were asked to pronounce upon the quality of the champagne, and, without hesitation, declared it to be a *Brut.*

We were crossing from Calais to Dover the other night, and are bound to say that we sympathised with the gentleman who, in reply to the question from the officer at the gangway, "Are you a British subject?" remarked "Yes, but I'm d——d if I shall be much longer." What a farce and a fizzle this Aliens' Act is!

It used to be said of the American tinned meat and fish merchants that they eat what they can and can what they can't. It now appears that they can whatever they can.

Apropos to the Home Secretary's recent announcement that the Government had provided the funds to enable one of the witnesses in the Hugh Watt case to go to Canada, one of the Fleet Street Poets—and their name is legion—sends us the following:—

THE SPECIAL SERVICE FUND

I'm in want of deportation
  To a sweet and smiling land,
Where there's room for all the Weary
  Weary Willies and their band,
Where the tramp can lie on feathers,
  And the rogue is never shunned,
So I'll make an application
  To the Special Service Fund.

But they'll want some special service
  Ere they send me o'er the seas
To that land of peace and plenty
  Where I'll pass my days in ease.
I'm a good 'un as a witness—
  By a counsel never stunned.
That's the way I'll get my ticket
  From the Special Service Fund!

I can swear without a tremor,
  And my tongue is always glib,
You will never hear me stutter
  When I'm uttering a fib.
I could write a blessed novel,
  I've a fancy so fecund,
So I'll bring it into action
  For the Special Service Fund.

* * * *

See! I got my tip and took it,
  And they planted me on deck
Of a jolly ocean liner
  That was sailing for Quebec.
No, they never needed axing,
  They were never, never dunned,
But they stumped up slap, the Johnnies
  Of the Special Service Fund.

Zealous attempts are being made to boom so-called "natural" waters. But what is the advantage of a natural over an artificial water? The latter at least may be clean. The former is exposed to mud, microbes, and all the excrements of the three kingdoms.

By the way, before the "Daily Telegraph" goes any further with its revelations as to the morals of the London streets, may we suggest that it should appoint a censor of its own advertising columns? "Electrical vibration treatment" and "medical rubbing"! There is, to say the least, a very Continental flavour about these, and that is saying "the least." Unless they are removed, we shall say more!

We think of inventing a new game for winter evenings. We shall call it Party Politics. It will require a box of figures called Statesmen, and another box containing a collection of speeches—being extracts from debates and answers to questions in the House; and the game will consist of correctly placing the speeches in the hands of the right statesmen—each Speech having a key number. When all the Statesmen are provided by the players with their speeches, someone will refer to the key, and, examining the speeches in the hands of the figures, will say, "I find that Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman is making one of Mr. Balfour's speeches; that Mr. Winston Churchill is using Mr. Chamberlain's words," and so on—and then the company will laugh and say, "What a farce the whole thing is."

Busybodies are again clamouring for the abolition of barmaids. The effect would be to restrict the field of female employment. It may be true that the fumes of alcohol and the society of bar-loafers are not desirable for tender damsels; but is that a reason for condemning them to the fumes of white lead or the companionship of the streets?

Mr. Cluer, the magistrate, complains that, despite the palatial corridors and hall of his new police-court, there is practically no accommodation for the public. The Court must have been built for Mr. Justice Grantham.

Although the question of the Disestablishment of the Church is for the moment out of the region of practical politics, the principles involved in its discussion meet us in almost every burning controversy of the hour. Thus we have bishops and canons pleading "for secular instruction only" at the expense of the State, while the degenerate successors of our old Nonconformist divines have turned Erastian, and are urging the State to set up a religion of its own.

The Servian regicides have been placed on the retired list—surely a mild punishment for their atrocious crime. It is to be hoped that Sir Edward Grey will exact a more ample reparation before resuming diplomatic relations. When will King Peter be placed on the retired list?

We beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will ascertain from the Inland Revenue the amount of Mr. Gerald Balfour's income-tax assessment.

Colonel Maxse, C.B., D.S.O., in 1899 violently attacked Mr. Winston Churchill's "River War," in Brother Leo Maxse's "National Review." False, malicious, ungentlemanly were among the choice epithets applied to the standard authority on the Egyptian campaign. Last year the Colonel published, from his brother's office, a book called "Seymour Vandeleur," in which scores of passages were taken without acknowledgment from the work he had so bitterly decried. This plagiarism was exposed in "Truth" last month, and an explanation was politely invited—but so far the truculent Balfour's income-tax assessment?

The Man in the Street is now to be superseded by the *Woman* in the street. Apart, however, from the fact that the police will have their hands very full if they are to arrest all who are not "respectable," it is hard to see why walking should be made a test of virtue as well as of sobriety. Couples in cabs cannot always produce their marriage lines, nor is continence invariably found in a coupé. Unless we are careful, a new terrorism for the citizen will be established. We shall be arresting the man who is looking into the shop window and calling upon him to prove that he is not a thief; and the habitual smoker will have to be confined to the cells until he can exculpate himself from intended arson.

SOME SCRAPS FROM MY DIARY.

BY THE EDITOR.

Dr. Parker and the Collection.

During the week in which the late Dr. Parker was editing *The Sun*—then under my control—I had several interesting talks with him. About that time I was addressing a series of meetings at Cannon Street Hotel in connection with a group of companies of which I was chairman, and the shareholders were being asked to pay up certain new calls upon their holdings. I observed one day to the Doctor, "After all, we're very much in the same line of business—except that I preach in Cannon Street, and you on Holborn Viaduct." To which came the prompt reply, "But look at the difference in our collections."

Home Rule in the Channel.

I think it was on the last day of the year 1887 that I crossed the Channel in company with the late Mr. Gladstone. I had shortly before contested the Hornsey Division of Middlesex in the Liberal interest—the main issue being at that time, of course, Home Rule. I asked to be presented to the Grand Old Man, who had just entered a private cabin. After some demur on the part of the attendant, I was informed that I could "just speak to Mr. Gladstone, but, as it was necessary he should rest, I must not be more than five minutes." I stepped into the cabin, and after a few commonplaces had been exchanged, made a casual reference to my late fight. The old man was reclining on the couch, but as "Home Rule" was mentioned he sprang up like the sick dog in the picture, "Who said 'Rats'?" and from that moment, despite my constant attempts (in obedience to the gesticulations of the man at the window) to take my leave, he poured forth such a flood of eloquence on the wrongs of Ireland as shamed the ocean we were crossing. I sat spellbound at the sight of this old man eloquent, with all the enthusiasm and fervour of youth still within his soul, and scarcely a word passed my lips. And in this way we reached Boulogne. The servant opened the door, and Mr. Gladstone shook me warmly by the hand, and thanked me "for *all I had told him*"!

The Candidate and the Tallyman.

During the recent election I was canvassing a poor district, where almost everything is bought upon the hire, or tally system. Most of the families are in arrear with one or other of their payments, and it is a matter of difficulty for a black-coated stranger to find anybody "at home." At one house, meeting with the usual story that "mother is out, and father too," I espied the lady of the establishment peeping at me from a back door, and, making myself known to her, I observed by way of putting her at her ease, "I suppose you thought I had called about the rent, or the sewing-machine?" "No, sir," she replied, "to tell you the truth, *I thought you was the mangle*"!

Justice Hawkins and Job.

The late Lord Justice Rigby was only once in his life called upon to address a jury—his practice being at the Equity Bar. This was during the Hansard Union trial. He was Solicitor-General at the time, and his leader, the late Sir Charles Russell, who was Attorney-General, had left the finish of the case in his hands. Poor Sir John, as he then was, flustered and floundered, and, despite numerous hints from the Bench, went rambling on. At last, Mr. Justice Hawkins abandoned himself in despair, and after another hour or so of Sir John's address, was observed to pass a slip of paper to one of the junior counsel engaged in the case—I think it was Mr. Charles Mathews—and this is what was written on it:—

PATIENCE COMPETITION.

First Prize: Henry Hawkins.
Honourable Mention: Job!

JOHN BULL IN PARLIAMENT.

Back from the Holidays.

We came back—that is, those of us who hadn't been away—on Thursday; and as JOHN BULL goes to Press to-day (Monday) there is not much to report. As is usual when nobody is likely to be in the House, the Orders of the Day simply consisted of voting away twenty millions, or so—mostly for Army purposes; and as we somehow or other cannot bring ourselves to any degree of enthusiasm upon slaughter-house questions, we did not remain after Prayers.

Prayers and Chairs.

We were obliged to be there then—otherwise our seat would have been in jeopardy. For whilst we have all been waxing eloquent about sectarianism in the schools, the fact remains that a member of Parliament cannot secure his seat in the House *unless he is present at prayers*. The only people who are free from this condition are the occupants of the two front benches. Is this because Ministers and ex-Ministers have found salvation, or are they past praying for?

South Africa Again.

On Friday, certain Colonial Office votes afforded an opportunity of once more talking about our Africo-Chinese Empire. Rufus Isaacs, the youthful K.C. with the old head, wanted the place laid out in model farms, so that when the mines are worked out the miners can go digging for something they can eat. And Walsh, the Sturdy, wished to know once and for all when the Chinese Labour hoax was to end. He didn't want "this damnable legacy" left to the Transvaal Cabinet about to be formed. Macarness took up a similar attitude—only, of course, in more decorous language. He never swears. Winston, the Little Hercules, was up and at 'em. The Government were doing everything possible about the Land, but it was an expensive job; whilst as regards the coolies, nothing was being left undone to make them happy and comfy. But the worst of it all was that they didn't want to go back home. Most disappointing. They are worse than that famous lost explorer who was extremely wroth when the rescue party discovered him. Perhaps they are all married men.

The Repatriation Proclamation.

During the afternoon a great compliment was paid to JOHN BULL. We had requested a few weeks ago to be furnished with a copy of the original Chinese Proclamation, in order that we might, with the aid of a popular dictionary, check its accuracy with the remarkable Anglo-Oriental effusion which Winston recently read to the House. But now, being espied in our corner by the ever-vigilant Under-Secretary, we were entrusted with the actual original, just received by the Colonial Office, with a request to return it when we had finished with it. We felt a little dazed at this signal mark of favour, but having regained consciousness, and noticing that the outer lobby was empty we adjourned thither, spread the precious parchment on the floor, and proceeded, on bended knees, to examine it. We were just ruminating as to which was its right way up when John Burns (John is everywhere) asked if he might come by; then Sir Howard Vincent trod on it (because it was foreign, we suppose), and then the Press and the police began to gather round. Then a cry of "Who goes home?" announced that the House was up—so to avoid injury to a State document we rolled it up and bore it home in triumph. Next week we shall give a facsimile of it, with two independent translations by Chinese experts—and perhaps the public will then better understand why it has fallen so flat in Africa. In the meantime, JOHN BULL literally holds the destiny of the coolies in his hand.

A Penny off Tea.

We said last week that when the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced the reduction in the tea duty, "no one looked more surprised than Tommy Lough."

A PENNY OFF TEA!

In confirmation of this, we give a sketch of the member for West Islington, as our artist *says* he saw him on his way to the House on Budget day. We also give Mr. Lough's Parliamentary chief, the Minister for Education—enlarged, in proper proportion, to represent his relative official importance—*and to fill up the page!*

A MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

JOHN BULL IN THE COURTS.

Barristers and their Fees.

Last week reference was made on this page to barristers who retain fees paid for the conduct of cases in which they fail to appear, and the unwillingness of the Attorney-General to condemn procedure which to laymen seems dishonest. It is an old grievance, and that it remains unredressed is probably due to the fact that those who are the offenders have a preponderating influence in the profession. To some extent litigants have the remedy in their own hands if only they choose to use it. The importance of having a leading counsel, anyway in common law cases, and where no very technical questions are involved, is much exaggerated. In a municipal dispute, or licensing appeal, there may be advantage in briefing men like Mr. Macmorran, or Mr. Casson, or Mr. Danckwerts, with their exceptional knowledge of very complicated and not always reconcilable statutes, but in ordinary cases, tried by a Common Law judge, it is doubtful whether the litigant loses anything by trusting to a competent junior. Nowadays, juries are not swayed by forensic eloquence as they are said to have been fifty years ago. Moreover, as often as not the K.C. is coached by his junior, who has had plenty of time to study his brief, and if left to himself would be just as likely as his better known leader to get a verdict. Blackburn and Bowen, two of our greatest judges, never took "silk."

Solicitors and their Costs.

There is a practice among solicitors even more indefensible than that of pocketing unearned brief fees. The K.C. may plead, for what it is worth, that his client knew he ran the risk of his Counsel being engaged in another Court, and one who can brief a leading K.C. is generally well-to-do. But the practice to which we refer touches the needy, the man in distress, and is rendered possible only because he is in distress. It is that of exacting a guinea, or some such sum, before staying distraint. Here is a case which came to our knowledge some time ago, and is typical. A man owed a tradesman £12 10s. 0d. He had dealt with him for twenty years, and had been a punctual payer, but losses came, and bills grew. The tradesman pressed, and issued a writ. It cannot be said that he had been a long sufferer. The bill consisted of a single item bought on March 7, 1904; the writ was issued on August 24 of the same year. The debtor could not immediately satisfy it, but he saw his way to do so in a month. His obvious course was to give notice of defence, which would have secured him the time he wanted, and probably much longer, having regard to the period of the year. But he was not a man accustomed to be sued, and so, not even exhausting the days of grace given by the writ, he went immediately upon the receipt of it to his creditor and asked him for the month. It was given without demur, but as a matter of form, said the creditor, "you must mention the matter to my solicitors." The debtor went to them—an eminently respectable City firm—and they promised to give effect to their client's wishes, provided—and here comes the imposition—the debtor paid them forthwith a guinea "for costs." The debtor demurred, pointing out that their client had given the promise of time unconditionally, and that he (the debtor) was so pressed at the moment that even the finding of a guinea was a serious matter to him. The solicitors were unmoved. They must have the guinea down or they would distrain. The debtor went back to his creditor, but he would not interfere, and so the guinea had to be paid.

The Law Society.

The debtor, a blunt man, said he had been blackmailed. Blackmail is defined as extorting money by means of intimidation, or threats of injury of any kind, and the action of these solicitors will seem to many to come under this description. However that may be, the debtor determined to write to the Secretary of the Law Society, being under the impression that one of the main objects of that Society is to take cognizance of unprofessional conduct. The letter was submitted in due course to the Council, who curtly intimated that they did not see that there was any ground for complaint. The reasons for this conclusion—the facts were never in dispute—were invited, and the inquirer was thereupon informed by the Council that the solicitors were justified in making the charge because giving time involved professional services which their client could not be asked to pay. The victim, thinking this dictum of the Society a matter of public interest, mentioned to the Secretary in his closing letter his intention to ask the "Times" to publish the correspondence, whereupon he was informed that, although none of the letters were marked private, he must treat them as confidential. Disgusted, he let the matter drop.

Now why should a correspondence of this kind be treated as private? It dealt with a matter of public interest, and the "Times" was not likely to publish libellous statements. And what is to be said of the reason given by the Society as justification for the extraction of the guinea on the plea of professional services that could not be charged to the client? These services consisted of ringing him up to confirm by a word the debtor's statement. If the case had run its ordinary course the solicitors must have communicated with their client before the day of trial; if the defendant had paid the money into Court a day or two beforehand they could not have put any additional charge upon him; the creditor might have taken them right into Court without their being able to get anything more out of him for themselves. It was not one of those cases where a debtor resorts to every device the law permits to embarrass and delay. There had been no long-drawn-out correspondence, no defence, and the debtor had gone out of his way to make recovery easy for the creditor. Moreover, on the face of the plaint £1 5s. 8d. was allowed for "Solicitors' costs." We cannot see what possible justification there is for the guinea charge, common though it is, and it is not to the credit of the Incorporated Law Society that it upholds it. These are the things that give solicitors such a bad name.

Justice Joyce and the Motor.

The following is a report of an incident in Mr. Justice Joyce's Court a few days ago:—

> "In the Chancery Division yesterday Mr. Justice Joyce, on a debenture holder's motion for the appointment of a receiver and manager of three motor omnibuses belonging to the Rapid Road Transit Company, remarked: 'We don't want any more motor omnibuses on the streets. If you want a manager so that you can run these 'buses, then I won't do it. You can have a receiver, and if a manager is necessary you must apply to Chambers.'"

This sort of thing does not conduce to the reputation of the Courts. What has Mr. Justice Joyce's private opinion about motor omnibuses to do with a motion for the appointment of a receiver? What he had to do was to grant or reject a perfectly legitimate application made on behalf of debenture holders. Instead, he puts them to the delay and expense of going to Chambers because he happens not to like motor omnibuses. Nobody can associate pettiness or conscious unfairness with the bluff and rubicund judge with the grating voice who presides in Chancery Court No. 3, but he blurts out opinions that should be reserved for his club or his dinner-table, as for example in the Fletcher Moulton case, where he told the plaintiffs their evidence was not to be believed, an opinion pointedly repudiated by the Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Romer and Lord Justice Cozens-Hardy when they reversed his decision.

We strolled into Mr. Justice Grantham's Court on the second day that Mr. Gus Elen's libel case was being heard. His lordship arrived twenty minutes late, bringing his morning's mail with him. He read, whilst on the bench seven, and wrote five, letters, besides receiving half-a-dozen visits from his clerk and entering upon some lengthy conferences with him. At the close of Mr. Harry Randall's examination, the learned Judge expressed his disappointment that this celebrated comedian had not given them a "taste of his quality" whilst in the box.

The Wakley Verdict.

The Coroner in the Wakley case seems to have been puzzled by the desire of the jury to bring in a verdict of "murder," but not "wilful murder." Clearly what they meant was manslaughter. They believed, upon facts which left little room for doubt, and which would have been much strengthened but for the rather unusual action of Dr. Thomas in refusing to take additional evidence: (1) that the death was caused by a soldier at present unidentified; (2) that there was no premeditation; and (3) that there was great provocation. Upon these findings the proper verdict would be manslaughter. There must be malice aforethought to constitute murder. Murder is not alleviated into manslaughter, say the text-books, unless occasioned by some sudden and sufficiently violent provocation. And sufficient provocation, according to Mr. Justice Stephen, in his "Digest of the Criminal Law," assumes that the person provoked is at the time when he does the act deprived of the power of self-control by the provocation which he received. That is what the jury found in this case.

JOHN BULL IN THE CITY.

A Word for the Promoter.

We ventured the opinion last week that the present stagnation on the Stock Exchange is due to the absence of the promoter-showman, a personality whose doings have for many years been boomed by the Press, and who, in his turn, has boomed the share market. Our readers, or, at any rate, those who have gambled in the shares of unworthy promotions, will shrug their shoulders and exclaim: "Better far that the market remain stagnant than that the promoter return with his front-sheets and his hangers-on."

We are prepared to say a word in defence of the promoter of joint stock companies. At the moment some 50,000 joint-stock enterprises, having a total paid-up capital of about £200,000,000, owe their existence to the promoter, and hardly any flourishing concern, whether it be a railway or a universal provider, exists that has not been through his hands. That there are dishonest rogues who have foisted rotten companies upon the public cannot be denied; but there are black sheep in every fold, and one might as well argue that the public should not eat Crosse and Blackwell's potted meats because of the Chicago revelations, or that they should not insure their lives because of the American insurance scandals.

Caveat Emptor.

A few years ago we should hardly have dared to speak in defence of the company promoter; but the public has been educated up to an appreciation of the difference between an honest and a dishonest joint-stock enterprise. And, after all, the legal maxim, "Caveat Emptor," applies as well to the purchase of shares as to that of a horse. Let the would-be purchaser well examine the goods he is offered, and, unless the warranty he receives be fraudulent (and the law will, in that event, cancel the bargain for him), he should be able to look after himself.

A New Theory.

It is said that Providence causes wars in order to deal effectively with over-population. May it not also be that this same Providence creates the promoter for some good purpose? Cast your minds back to the most conspicuous company promotions during the past decade, and note the result. The promoter entered the field, and by his operations attracted to investment money which, in the majority of cases, was lying practically idle in savings' banks drawing small interest, or was hidden in the stockings of the thrifty. To allow it to remain there, and keep it from circulating freely throughout the country, was deemed by an all-wise Providence to be harmful to the Body Economic. So the promoter was created as the conduit-pipe through which this stream of money should reach other centres, where it would do most good. In the majority of cases the money assisted enterprises which had been languishing for want of capital to right themselves, to give more employment to workmen and other assistants, to create new factories, and to turn out more goods for the benefit of mankind. Even in the minority of cases, where the capital was taken from the public to bolster up, or finance, worthless enterprises, it did, whilst it lasted, get into the pockets of persons who knew better how to spend it than did those who were hoarding it up without themselves deriving any appreciable benefit for themselves or anyone else.

Pity the Poor Promoter.

Not only is the promoter maligned by the public, but he has been, and is, ill-served even by that very Providence which, as we suggest, created him to become a sort of clearing-house; for when his task is done he is generally left almost penniless himself. It would be invidious to mention names, but our readers can readily conjure up to themselves the later history of all the most prominent company promoters of the second half of the last century. What became of them? They fretted Life's stage for a few months, or perhaps years, and ninety-nine per cent. of them went to their graves paupers; whilst ninety-nine per cent. of those that live would, to-day, be glad to have as many shillings as they, in the hey-day of their prosperity, controlled thousands of pounds. Their mission having been fulfilled, Providence had no further use for them, and they retired into obscurity again.

Some Instances.

Amongst the achievements of promoters, whose end was more disastrous to themselves than to the public, we have the buildings in which the Hotel Cecil is housed, the Whitehall Rooms, Leicester Square, the "Bakerloo" Railway, Linotype machines, Dunlops, Bovril, and other industrial concerns providing the necessaries of life to be found in every house. We have flourishing seaside resorts, built by "front-sheeters," who but for the company promoter would hardly have been able to engage in such enterprises; we have seen worthy men, struggling against adversity, put on their feet by their association, in some capacity, with the promoter, and, what is more than significant, we know of many a newspaper that to-day would not be spreading its light and learning upon an uncouth world had it not been for the excessive patronage of its advertisement columns by the enterprising promoter of joint-stock companies.

L'Envoi.

There are signs in the air that several schemes are being pigeon-holed ready to be placed before the public in joint-stock form at an early date, and it is for the purpose of clearing the air of cant that we have ventured to say a word for the promoter, whose business it will be to stand sponsor to these ventures. Let our readers examine each proposition placed before them on its merits, and John Bull will be only too pleased to place his knowledge of things in the City at their disposal.

Lipton's Lament.

After reading Sir Thomas Lipton's speech at the meeting of Liptons, Limited, one wonders how it is that any grocers or provision dealers made profit last year. We thought grocers were in favour of the reduction in the tea duty from 8d. to 6d., but it seems that it involved them in heavy loss. We thought, too, that grocers viewed with approval the fall in the price of sugar, but this fall, as it seems, had a very disturbing influence on trade. Then prices in the provision department were abnormal; they were so high as to make it almost impossible to earn a profit. Nevertheless, profits have been earned, and even Liptons, Limited, pays 7 per cent., though not without effort. Other companies doing similar business have paid a good deal more than 7 per cent., notwithstanding tea and sugar troubles, and the rest. The Lipton report never gives much information to shareholders, and the Chairman seldom descends to particulars, but there are questions connected with the management which press for answer. Why, for example, has the ratio of administration expenses to gross earnings gone up from 26.96 in 1899 to 30.75 in 1906, the latter percentage not including the Managing Director's remuneration, whereas the ratio for, say, the Home and Colonial Stores, Limited, is under 27 per cent? And how does Sir Thomas Lipton explain his statement that "our trade has been well maintained," seeing the gross receipts have fallen from £231,132 in 1905 to £201,309 in 1906, and net profits are some £21,000 less? Does Sir Thomas Lipton consider trade "well maintained" when profits fall off 13 per cent. in a single year, and nearly 40 per cent. if the annual average of the company's initial period is taken?

* * * * *

The chief reason for the unsatisfactory position dis-

closed must be looked for elsewhere than in the directions indicated by Sir Thomas Lipton. They lie nearer home. The business was built up by the initiative, the energy, and the close attention to details given to it by its founder, to whom in turn it gave a great fortune. But under the company that has taken over the business these qualities are only conspicuous by their absence. Sir Thomas Lipton gives his time to the King's affairs, to yachting, and the like, and he has omitted to find a competent substitute for himself. An analogous concern to Liptons, the Maypole Dairy Company, is giving its ordinary shareholders 24 per cent., as against 7 of Liptons, and that not earned. Why is it? Go into any two of the shops of the two concerns, and you have the answer.

Allsopp's.

Allsopp's, a company that has made no return on its £110,000 of Cumulative Preferred stock since the first half of 1900, which only once in the last five years has been able to cover its pre-preference charges, and for the year ended 30th June last ran its business at a loss of £41,000, proposes to rehabilitate itself by renting the business of the Burton Brewery, which in its last financial year was over £3,000 short of earning its loan and debenture interest and other prior charges, and the business of Thomas Salt and Company, now in liquidation. To do this it will have to pay a rental of £70,000 per annum, plus other heavy financial obligations, the whole charge making a big hole in £100,000 per annum. On the face of it the scheme seems to be in the category of those which change bad to worse, and it will be surprising if it is accepted by the Allsopp shareholders without sharp fighting.

The causes which have led to the present plight of Allsopp's are no mystery. The business was sold for double its value; the directors were bitten badly by the tied house craze, squandering money right and left in getting the control of houses little worth having; and the management remains inefficient. Sound, shrewd direction might even now win back something of the old prosperity. The directors prefer a grandiose scheme of amalgamation, which must burden the company with an immense additional load of obligations without, so far as we can see, adequate advantage. The two businesses to be taken over control between them two thousand licensed premises, and this may commend them to the Allsopp Board; but this control has not kept one company out of debt, or the other from liquidation. We should have thought that the Allsopp shareholders would be sick of tied houses. If they are well advised, they will reject the policy of expansion about to be submitted to them. It is not expansion, but contraction, that is wanted; not more tied houses, but better brew, and cheaper production.

The Ceylon Company of Pearl Fisheries, Limited.

According to advices from Ceylon, this company is likely to make a good thing this year out of its bargain with the Ceylon Government. The fishery of 1906 was much larger than was anticipated by the Colony when the company got its lease. The total profits of the fishery from oysters in the season was £89,116 7s. 11d., 40,092,650 oysters being caught in thirty-six days. The offices of the company are at the same address as those of the Exploration Company, which is largely interested in the venture. The total number of ordinary £1 shares allotted to the end of May was 146,050, with 289,850 deferred shares of one shilling each. Some of the principal holders are given below:—

	Ord.	Def.
Exploration Co., Ltd.	23,933 ...	40,000
A. Reitlinger	10,000 ...	16,000
Leopold Albu	10,000 ...	16,000
H. Mosenthal	10,000 ...	16,000
O. E. Warburg	5,000 ...	8,000
Rt. Hon. Sir. W. Ridgeway ...	1,000 ...	1,600
Rt. Hon. J. F. Moulton	1,000 ...	1,600

Sir J. West Ridgeway is chairman, and the directors between them draw £1,050 per annum, and take 5 per cent. of the profits after a certain distribution to the ordinary shareholders. The deferred shares, which are one shilling each, taking a moiety of the balance of profit after the ordinary shareholders have got their cumulative 6 per cent. The total amount of cash received by the company up to the end of May was £86,942.

Barberton Exploration.

It is a sound old adage that bids one "take time by the forelock." That evidently is the opinion of the directors of the Barberton Exploration and Development Company, who intimate that they "have proceeded to allotment, and that the list finally closes on Saturday next." "Second thoughts" sometimes lead to cancelment of applications, and the Barberton Exploration Directors evidently want no nonsense of that sort.

Rubber—and Rubber.

That handsome dividends may be expected from rubber companies moderately capitalised, and with a fair acreage of trees fit to tap, is shown, to go no further, by the report of the Selangor Rubber Company for last year. This company has just declared a dividend of 20 per cent., free of tax, but then its capital is only £26,300 all told, and the rubber yield in 1905 was secured from trees planted in 1898 and 1899. A considerable further acreage will begin to yield this year, and even at much lower prices for rubber, the Company, with its widening acreage under yield, may be expected to pay increasing dividends. Contrast the position of its shareholders with that of those who may be foolish enough to find some of the £180,000 asked for by the latest rubber formation, the Kuala Lumpur Rubber Company, Limited. This concern takes over certain "properties" in the Federated Malay States upon which, it is said, there are 11,896 trees tappable this year, and from these young trees it is gravely asserted that 25,963 lbs. of rubber may be expected, or considerably over 2 lbs. per tree, whereas 1 lb. per tree would be an excellent yield from trees tapped for the first time. It would seem that the properties to be taken over by the company were sold as late as December last for £60,000, and we will venture to say that the sellers made an excellent bargain for themselves, but now the properties are to be sold to the Kuala Lumpur Company, for £160,000, of which £142,000 must be in cash, and the whole £160,000 will be if the public are foolish enough to find the £180,000. Can anything be more preposterous? Last year the Selangor Rubber Company, with its £26,300 capital, actually got 29,750 lbs. of rubber; this year the Kuala Lumpur Company, with its £180,000 capital, of which £160,000 is to go to the vendors, *hopes* to get 25,963 lbs.!

Our Co-operative Fund.

We hope to announce details of this scheme next week, and in reply to all inquiries we must state that until the plan is fully before our readers we cannot accept any responsibility in regard to investments. We have therefore. returned all sums forwarded to us. All we can do at present is to give such of our readers as seek it the best advice, legal and otherwise, in our power, and accordingly we append the following answers to questions addressed to us during the past week:—

Nemo (Brighton).—You have no claim.

A. T. (Balham).—It is *not* a mortgage—only a Bond.

Prefs. (Stoke).—They are cumulative, and therefore you will be entitled to all arrears.

L. C. P. (Birmingham).—Vote for the Official Receiver.

M. R. (Glasgow).—The resolution is in order.

J. R. T. (Croydon).—The accounts are due in September.

F. L. (London).—Give them a wide berth.

F. B. (Reading).—As safe as the Bank of England.

L. P. & Co. (Oxford).—Very respectable and sound firm.

T. R. W. (Ealing). They are *not* members of the Stock Exchange, and never were.

Nestor (Lewes).—In our opinion the provision is illegal.

Receiver (Brighton).—*You* are the proper custodian of the books.

A. C. (Newbery).—They are utterly worthless.

L. T. K. (Leeds).—Send us the papers.

R. L. (Bath).—He is wrong. You cannot recover.

SOME STATESMEN I HAVE INTERVIEWED.

By Ben Tillett.

What on earth is it which, in spite of common-sense, and even conviction, moves one to be pliant and humble in the presence of the alleged great?

Is it the impressions of childhood, formed by Punch's successful career of crime, against Judy, law and order, or forsooth is it the effect of shrinking and abasement in the chilly presence of the austere cleric, or the awe inspired by religious functions? Even the gaudy trappings of a mayor's carriage may affect us. I have taken part in many deputations to Cabinet Ministers, and in all the spirit of obsequiousness has shown itself markedly. The State buildings, with lofty ceilings, large walls, sombre tone in colouring, massive furniture, and the crowd of solemn, perfunctory officials, all add to the illusion of power.

The wisdom born of experience, which indicates the certainty of being sent back empty-handed, is looked upon as sinister, and there are pecking and sharp words of rebuke at any suspicions against the great person to be interviewed. From all parts of the United Kingdom, at great expense and with greater hope, your representative deputation has journeyed in triumph to the Capital. But on reaching Whitehall, this mood is soon chilled; one grows conscious of his ill-fitting boots; another grows doubtful of his rhetoric; hope sinks to fear, and responsibility becomes humble.

The Late Mr. Gladstone.

Some personalities leave vivid impressions on one's mind—none more so than the late Mr. Gladstone. After preliminaries of a protracted character, a well-ordered straggling crowd would be ushered into a big reception room. An interval was allowed to get settled, a hush, a slight creaking of doors, a stirring and moving of feet and craning of necks, and the great political figure came in, with an old-world obeisance, a courtliness and dignity, which added refinement to the scene, where burly miner and rough docker jostled each other. The rustle of papers hurriedly arranged, and then one was conscious of a leonine head, a strong, heavy face, shaggy eyebrows, ever alert, piercing eyes. Then a voice with suppliant sweetness, asked for a statement. In direct and pungent English, truth would be served up. Blunt demand or reasonable appeal alternated, the while quick working brain and eager hands noted salient points. The mobile face, the puckered brow, the swift, nervous movement of the head, were in themselves magnetic. The crowd paid more notice to the listener than the speaker. The octopus brain dealt with the information, it sifted and analysed, and was ready with elaborate reply. Net result, nil, nil, the charm and refinements of vagueness, soporific, intellectual, opiate and emptiness. Yet what exhilaration, what a mirage! Could any answer from human lips reach higher urbanity, or bring to argument a more exquisite courtesy?

With eyes wide open, and mind undeceived by the labyrinthine statement, this strong, masterful nature compelled a wondering respect, even for the worst of the "will o' the wisp" promises. The cold truth is that Gladstone's blessing was a stone, and not bread. If ever there was a being who never lied and never told the truth, that being was Mr. Gladstone. He never created, he never destroyed, he originated no movement, he wrecked none, yet the multitude hung on the honeyed words of the latter-day Cicero. A stormy petrel in the theatrical furies of parliamentary warfare, no upheaval, no epoch, no historical permanence belongs to him. All the genius, all the gifts of the muses, the magic of utterance and a fascination of manner were his; he could compel reverence from those he sent empty-handed away, his victims happily oblivious of emptiness. I know of no minister who so readily grasped the essentials, who so completely mastered facts; mine, machine and ship were known in detail to him; yet I cannot trace any direct result of any deputation of workmen's representatives to Mr. Gladstone. While a Talleyrand defied the disruptions of empires and held to office, Gladstone, with other morals and other weapons, held fast to the affections of the British people even when rude change hurled him again and again from office.

The Late Lord Salisbury.

Lord Salisbury's intellect ran in grooves and parallel, no transverse network, bewildering and evasive. Cynical, swift in retort, nervous with a nervousness often taken for antagonism, he aroused resentment and suspicion, even when most sincere. Bluntness of speech, straightout demand, met with as direct a refusal. He always angered his deputations; Mr. Gladstone always won his interviewers over. There was always more fire and meaning in a Salisbury deputation. Class antagonism was felt, although the game was played openly and candidly. Lord Salisbury's deputations left with blood hot and brain awhirl, ready to begin the campaign anew, whereas a Gladstone deputation almost invariably left, feeling the inertia of satisfaction, or the helplessness of impotency. "Cruel organisations," "Twenty years of firm government" had an electric influence (even as mere phrases) more potent than any well-turned sentence of Mr. Gladstone. This would-be modern Strafford unconsciously stirred political stagnation by the apeing of "thoroughness" and the dogmatic denial, in sinister terms, of wrongs only too obvious to seeing eyes.

Heavy of jowl, with dome-like head, eyes in which contempt and curiosity mingled, lumbering, bored, he always seemed to paralyse the mind of those addressing him. The most eloquent halted, stumbled over plain facts; just claim, sincere appeal, were withered to dust, by one who sought dignity in cruelty and power in whatever is. This is not set down in malice, for Lord Salisbury's qualities, however antithetical they were from a labour standpoint, were just those qualities which roused, energised, awakened enthusiasm, and made the new political labour movement possible.

Mr. Chamberlain.

Mr. Chamberlain has no magnitude or depth. You feel the curt, rasping voice is calling out prices from a ledger. No feeling or passion; a ton of coal, a human life, are equally measurable quantities, assets of marketable values. A bold stare, almost vulgar in its challenge, meets you. That aggressive nose, it seems almost to peck one, its pugnacity warns you of barbed wires and dangerous footfalls. Yet I know of no man whose examination could be more penetrating or exacting. It is always a bleeding process this intellectual vampire imposes. He seems to absorb, not as a means of judging or giving, but for himself, to turn information into viper-like attack, into ridicule and gibe. He is not only the least kindly of the ministers I have met, but he is the least gentlemanly. He is a mixture of despot and "shopwalker," a modern Nero and tyrant, fulfilling a great office of state. His political customers are victims to his wiles, exaggerated values only belong to his own party "tommie" shop; the other party's goods are rags and tinsel. His soul never rises above barter, a deputation he treats as if the men and speakers were commercial travellers, pleading to sell their wares. He creates an atmosphere of market, enlarges not on the wants or value offered by an expectant deputation, but imposes the needs of his firm, the immensity of their business, and belittles with true commercial instinct, all that may mean life and death to the earnest band of men, who had hoped for broad, statesmanlike treatment. He is most unsatisfactory, but his subtlety never deludes his victims. One feels instinctively his insincerity. Yet this mind without magnitude has roused more vitriolic passion, stirred to frenzy of war fever an otherwise peaceful people, than any other. His personality is fascinating, almost romantic in its piratical escapades and its political cuckooism. He is a diplomatic cynic, and has turned trustful deputations into the worst breed of doubters and cynics.

Mr. Balfour.

Mr. Balfour disarms you without the power to convince; an aggressive humility, a gentleness in dialectical subterfuge makes him as interesting as a clever comedy. Had Mr. Balfour been Irish, and forced to get his own living, he would have been a second (or first) Bernard Shaw. One of our Speakers, coming from a deputation, summarised aptly his experience and estimate of the statesman, by remarking: "He says nothing so beautifully, I could listen to him for hours." Languorous almost to effeminacy, long, attenuated arms, limply dragging by side, or held by thumbs to armhole of waistcoat, an almost rueful look, which regrets being disturbed into consideration of the mundane. Cunninghame Grahame declares that Balfour's ancestors were raiders. I cannot believe they were energetic enough to steal or raid, or why should this gentle candle-holder exist. He is the laziest political juggler who at any time attempted to entertain us. Immediately on taking his seat to listen, he assumes an air of well-bred boredom, his replies are in accordance with the best traditions of "perfectionist" counsels. I know of no man more able to set by the ears contending factions in labour ranks. While himself a philosophic doubter, he would impose the attrition of unanimity on the workers, before their essential rights may even claim consideration. Nothing leonine, masterful or strenuous could be introduced in any description of his character; the lack of these qualities makes possible a flexibility of political conscience and mentality, largely if not wholly accountable, for the protracted retention of his Premiership.

THE UNSEEN WORLD.

II.

By A. P. SINNETT,
Editor of *Broad Views*, Author of "Esoteric Buddhism," &c.

I pointed out last week how complicated the conditions were that happened to favour the communications received from the late Lord Carlingford since his passage to the Unseen World. If any one of these had been deficient, no correspondence would have come through. So it will perhaps be seen why the student of physical science is not surprised at the rarity of such results.

The Character of the Life Beyond.

Turning to the letters themselves, the parts which will chiefly interest the general reader are those which endeavour to describe the life the writer is actually leading. Its conditions differ so widely from those with which we are familiar here, that one can well imagine the difficulty he must have felt in picturing them to still incarnate friends. At first he describes the rush of wonder and delight with which he realised that in spite of passing through the death he had so much dreaded, he was still himself, vividly alive, and glowing with active thought even more than ever. This feeling expresses itself repeatedly in the earlier letters. And these also are filled with a new-born conviction, amounting almost to a consciousness, of Divine existence. But later on he answers a variety of questions concerning the life around him; so different from our own, that, to begin with, time is not punctuated as with us by the variations of day and night. Fatigue is an unknown condition, thought is continually active, and every one has plenty to do, taking pleasure in doing it. He describes himself as well aware of the fact that there are other states of being far higher than that he has as yet reached, that others are so far below the level on which he awakened that, as he says, "my spirit recoils from the horror and misery" they represent.

Progress in Knowledge.

"I retain my actual personality as when on earth," he tells us, "but am surprised and delighted to find a wider and unrestricted grasp and understanding of things. I feel as if hitherto I saw as through a glass darkly, now all things are made clearer and puzzle me no more." With the help of competent teachers in whose presence he finds himself, he is learning much concerning the laws which govern human evolution, and foremost amongst such acquisitions of knowledge he describes the principle of reincarnation—the law under which every human being returns again and again to the physical earth life, to work out further evolution through its experiences after resting each time for a while in such conditions of existence as that on which our valued correspondent has entered—and in others to which in progress of time he will assuredly attain.

The teaching to which he owes his comprehension of the reincarnation principle has also enlightened Lord Carlingford's mind concerning the dogmatic religions of our own period, in a way which for some devout enthusiasts is not a little disconcerting. For much that modern Christians as a rule accept as literal narrative of fact becomes transformed for the student of the Unseen World into allegorical imagery. The limitations under which I write will prevent me from entering more fully into this intricate subject.

A Wider Range of View.

Striking as this correspondence has been, it only illuminates one small region of the Unseen World, and many others are available for exploration. The use of that word must be explained more fully. For inquirers along the lines of spiritualism, the only way of gaining knowledge concerning the conditions of the next life depends upon the willingness of those who have already passed on to send back intelligence concerning the world they have entered. And I have already explained how many conditions must be present before such intelligence is likely to be available for us. But quite independently of communications sent from the Unseen World, it is possible for persons peculiarly gifted to investigate that region without themselves having died out of this one. The interpretation of this possibility will lead us beyond the limits of spiritualism into the domain of the occultist, and will thus introduce us to the possibilities of acquiring knowledge enormously more extensive than those dependent on spiritual mediumship. Before going on, however, a few words must be spent upon that condition described as mediumship, which renders some people a channel of communication with others on another plane of existence.

Mediumship.

For the occultist there is no particular difficulty in comprehending the characteristics of the medium, although to most of those who possess them they are wholly unintelligible. The point to be emphasised now is that the medium, however genuine he may be—and all the more so the more undeniably he is genuine—will never profess ability to call down or evoke any specific personality belonging to another plane of life. It is exceedingly important for all students of the subject to comprehend this view of the matter fully, because one of the indignant protests against spiritualism so frequently urged by those who know nothing about it is that they would intensely resent for themselves the idea of being dragged back from heaven to rap on tables and play the accordion, so that they are almost equally indignant at the idea of imposing this task on their friends. No spiritualistic medium, from the beginning of the movement till now, ever professed to be able to do anything of the kind. He simply provides conditions under which experience shows him that if any discarnate entity may happen to observe the arrangement, he may be enabled to avail himself of it for the purpose of communicating with this plane of life. So, if all these conditions are properly understood, anyone will realise how capricious must necessarily be the communications we receive through mediumship from that state of existence that most of us concerned with these things conventionally refer to as "the other side."

The Astral Body.

But, without knowing it, most people are better provided with means of investigating the other side than they suppose. The unseen world which surrounds this visible planet has its analogy, its corresponding phenonemon, in the case of each one of us inhabiting the visible world. Around each of us there is an invisible body—an organised material envelope—too delicate and subtle in its nature to be visible in the ordinary sense: visible only to an extraordinary sense, to one of those, in fact, with which it is itself endowed. And this "astral body," as it is technically called, is not rigidly attached to the physical organism—is detachable from it in the case of those who know how to control its operations by an effort of will, and for that matter is constantly detached from it spontaneously during ordinary sleep. And when so detached the consciousness which *is* the man, goes with it, leaving a slumbering organism behind which will only be awakened when *he*, the real entity, returns to it. Now the whole story which relates to the ordinary experiences of sleeping humanity is full of interest, but is not that which for the moment bears on the problem we have to deal with. It is only in the case of those who are sufficiently evolved along certain lines of development that the astral body can be detached from the physical by an effort of will, and when so detached can be guided by intention to observe the world on which it has entered, and (this is a tremendously important point) to bring back to the physical brain, when the entity returns, a recollection of that which it has observed. The conditions which render such memory recoverable will be discussed later on.

BARNI:
A TALE OF DEAD MEN.

By Mayo O'Blake.

Between the seething cauldrons of Hecla and the roaring capes of Finisterre there lies an island which is more heard of and less seen than it merits, for its charms are many and its inhabitants are very interesting and peculiar. Its name is, for the purposes hereof, the Ile d'Ecume, or Ecumea for short.

The matters treated of in this fragment took place at a time unequidistant between the last Derby and the first Crusade.

If there be some indefiniteness of epoch, it is because of the desire for peace, and anyone is at liberty to lengthen the perspective by shifting it back a few centuries, so as to reach a point that shall, if possible, be so vacantly obsolete as not to raise any fresh-born rancours or originate brand-new indignations.

In Ecumea, chronology is elastic and uncertain; history, which Byron says "lies like truth, and still more truly lies" in most places, is there singularly plastic and poetic. For the old island bards were the first historians, and the modern ones are mostly legislators—both sets knowing the side on which their bread, and patrons, should be buttered. Besides, accuracy is the hard and unimaginative attribute of the mechanical mind and of the prosaic Goth the Oppressor, and is abhorrent to the rhetoricians who constitute the majority in the island.

It has, indeed, been said by those who have earnestly studied the inner character of the Ecumeans, that a reformer or penman or orator has but to describe the real—or preferentially, because of the greater latitude, the fancied—wrongs of decades of centuries ago, to cause the leap-up, athwart the gulf of time, of furious ragings, cries for blood, and clamant demands for immediate monetary compensations.

The dim vistas of the geological ages would not avail to weaken the tides of self-pitying plaints, torrid denunciations, scathing vengeances, calculating claims, and eccentric justification if politics could, by any chance, be read into the oldest strata of the island.

For the Ecumeans are prone to the mystical and mythical, and love to be deceived and to deceive. They must not be taken too seriously, for they are a people naturally amiable and instinctively dramatic, notwithstanding their sudden wraths, explosive pugnacity, and the miraculous faculty of generally doing the wrong thing with prodigal pains and consummate cleverness.

But they are easy in laughter, prompt in repartee, lavish in hospitality, astoundingly contrary, and—except as regards the so-called middle, or newly educated class—beautifully courteous.

They like to live as in a perpetual theatre and to have their feelings agreeably agitated at all times.

It pays the actors, and, therefore, the unending combination of farce, comedy, pastoral and tragedy is always on the stage—with many variations, but always with similar aims and results, in the diversion of the audiences and in the honour, glory, and profit of the performers. The former is, of course, but the means to the latter, which is the true end.

This prelude—in a naturally round-about way—leads up to the story.

Barnabo Boyla—or Barni, for short—(he was born on St. Barnabas' day, hence his name) had his headquarters in Cascadia—"dear, dirty, delightful Cascadia"—but he lived all over Ecumea, in a sense.

He was a remarkable man, and he smiled, as if well pleased, when jokes were made on his name. Barabas was a leading line as to his Christian name, and blister—for boil—as to the surname. He seemed to like the variants.

Barni Boyla began life inconspicuously. He was a shop-boy, a stable help, a poor gentleman's servant, a porter, a brewery labourer, a promiscuous tout, a boxing man's chopping block, a seeker after odd jobs at hotel doors, a corner boy, a political character.

Thus he got lifted into occasional bits of employment, such as messages, shindies, and bill-sticking.

These were the first steps to fame and fortune, for politics were then unusually violent, exhilarating, and remunerative. He soon made his mark.

Because he could now be relied upon to find, or furnish, at the shortest notice, audiences to applaud, resist, eject, demonstrate, shout, defy, fight, and generally patronise as required, he began to make money, for every man paid him toll.

Considering that he could only read, and that without facility or pleasure, and only write with great difficulty, reluctance, and uncertainty of effect; that he had never been in America, and had never heard or read of methods there at work, and that his own experiences, though diversified, had been fraught with no glimmer or suggestion of organised extortion—it was wonderful how native genius asserted itself in him.

His greatness grew slowly, silently, surely. He drank hard, though unmethodically, and he knocked about incessantly; yet he contrived to do his thinking and planning in some strange ways.

Before long he owned, or controlled, bands of music, banners, victims of tyranny, and of landlordism, ex-prisoners, deputations, orators, newspapers, police friends, pugilists, journalists, and other political properties. He could take and execute contracts in any part of Ecumea for processions, meetings, demonstrations, heart-rending evictions, recrudescences of lawlessness, and any other functions, events, scene-shiftings, fulfilments of warnings, side-lights, and other curtain effects, just as if they were mere formal funerals, or innocent picnics, or ordinary industrial jobs.

There were other accessories—human documents—in cases of a striking nature, intended to harrow the eyes or feelings of strangers, for the supply of which he could be always depended upon.

The man did not live who could fairly cast any doubt upon the loyalty and zeal with which he did his work, and which had a fine immoral effect on his subordinates; for thoroughness was his watchword, and spot-cash his rule.

Over and over again had it happened that he had thriftily divided some brass band of his, half to one side and half to their opponents, both equally his customers, and that in the resulting skirmish or battle, the bandsmen, although colleagues—possibly because of it—fought whole-heartedly with each other, sparing neither brass nor reed, nor head of man or of drum. On such occasions, Señor Boyla would only smile, nod pleasantly, and have damages repaired without a grumble, fine, or stoppage.

His fame kept on increasing, for he was often called upon to lend money to many men whose names were more or less prominent on platforms, in the press, or even in the Legislative Assembly.

They borrowed assiduously—comrades, and their rivals, promulgators of causes, victims of oppression, martyrs, poets, heroes, conspirators, and professional savers of their country, of all factions; and neither he, nor they, ever bothered about repayment. He took care not to be the loser in the end.

He remained always the same modest, ignorant, hard-drinking Barni, as decent and open-hearted a fellow as ever bought an enemy or sold a friend; success did not spoil him, it merely developed him.

Men marvelled how his untutored head could hold the intricate ramifications of his immense business—his system of agents, spies, and correspondents; his newspaper arrangements; his grasp on thousands of men whom he could assemble at any time, at any spot ,and for any purpose; his capacity to organise, manage—and acquire—things, big and little; his ability to mobilise and have special trains at unsuspected hours and places; and to mislead—or guide—the police; and generally to do the many essential things without which the most fluent and luridly passionate speeches would be but as expletives in the teeth of a nor'-easter, or "as the crackling of thorns under the pot." . . .

And if he often got up agrarian outrages, as per indent, he also—but this was not generally known—contrived at times that the authorities got wind of intended meetings in proscribed localities, and other little matters to the like tenour.

The which were not without profit to him, especially when he had a use in some other place for the bands and demonstrators so put out of action, but paid for.

Besides, a prohibited assemblage could always be made to incite to indignation meetings in neighbouring towns and villages to protest against the brutal, wanton, arbitrary, provocative and unconstitutional action of the highly-denounced Executive and its heartless tools; and that meant business for him.

These things being "extras" paid him very well.

Now we know where we are, and the story really begins.

One day Señor Jacomo was commissioned to inform Señor Boyla that the Council of the "Grand League for the Abolition of Titles—and Title-deeds" had been considering the advisability of holding a series of great popular meetings throughout the southern half of the island, and to concert programmes and prices with him. Public affairs were getting into a condition of dangerous contentment and apathy, due to regrettable prosperity and scandalous peacefulness. The people must be roused somehow and lashed into fury over wrongs of which everyone was still unconscious, but of which the Council was in process of invention. For it was not enough to devise a burning grievance, and it was a simple enough thing to make a demand. The difficulty was to make the latter sufficiently appetising to their community to induce support of a physical, electoral, and, above all, financial description.

The meetings were designed to stir up the country, and to vivify and multiply the branches. It would be indispensable that they be attended with much excitement—music, flags, parades, fights, defiances, and martyrdoms in the form of an imprisoned corner-boy or two of the ruck of kept-legislators. Mere broken heads were but the trifling confetti of such revels—the playful indulgences of domestic consumption.

Above all, the Grand League for the Abolition, etc., wished to attack, expose, ridicule, arraign, and pulverise the General Abolition League—a secession from the Grand—which was making serious inroads into its membership, influence, and—more vital than either—subscriptions.

Barni warmly approved, and even wondered why such a policy had been so long delayed.

He made the customary loan, met the sub-committee, and, after further little personal accommodations, soon arranged "all in" terms, to mutual satisfaction, for a series of twenty monster meetings from Galué to Buchon.

Then he sent a satellite to find Señor Patsio, an energetic councillor of the younger League, with whom he had a good deal of liquor and aimless talk—ending in his letting fall some remarks, in a rambling sort of fashion, as if he were soliloquising rather than conversing, about the intentions of the original League, and made him a little loan.

An emergency Council meeting of the junior League was held within a few hours, and its plenary-empowered sub-committee met Señor Barni Boyla on that same evening and arranged "all in" terms with him for an identical programme of twenty monster meetings, to be concurrent, offensive, aggressive; to liven up the branches and to form new ones; and to pulverise and swallow up the enemy. The sequence of the meetings was to run from Buchon to Galué.

This settled, in businesslike form, Señor Boyla went to a certain tavern, and drank earnestly for some hours with a mob of journalists, politicians, elocutionists, police and other spies, boxers, handy men, and "miscellaneous," as he called them.

After which—as if he had not absorbed thirteen glasses of punch and several bottles of stout within the succinct period of two hours and ten minutes, antecedent imbitions not counting—he hummed an inconsequential tune and sauntered to his dingy home in the fine and squalid rooms of a great old house in a dark and neglected by-street, which had once been a fashionable one.

Señor Barni Boyla took off his coat and his collar and called Señor Timotheo Rili, who was, compendiously, his secretary, confidant, plenipotentiary, and general assistant.

Tim—that is, Timotheo—though paroquet-headed, red, grubby, and versatile, was a University graduate, an Honours man, and thoroughly alcoholic. He lived in the house, slept when not at work, and was capable of rapid, clever, and sustained labour at any point of the twenty-four hours, or for the whole of that period, or even for several times over, on end.

Barni was clear and concise in his instructions and explanations, and Tim was quick in seizing them, making his notes, as he went, in Greek characters but in the Gaelic tongue. It was wise to be wary.

Estimates and arrangements were being discussed when, late as the time was, they were interrupted. There was a ring at the door, and a burly sallow man, who also lived in the house, whose appearance instantaneously suggested a priest unfrocked or in disgrace, and who was then employed in writing up registers of names in a manner designed to mislead all who had not the key to the system, brought in a message.

"Rowl him in," said Barni, "and you'd better be afther skipping, Tim, for there's some fun, and business, to the fore, I'm thinking."

A tragic sort of party—dark, wild-eyed, middle-aged, but short and uncombed—hurriedly entered, and Timotheo carried his own flaming crest into retirement.

The visitor, Señor Urbino, was a great agitator, a political stormy petrel who created, and not merely predicted and joyed in the tempest; a very capable politician—ambitious, mendacious, elcquent, imaginative, overbearing, and shifty. Those who had had opportunity of observation knew that he was profuse of promise, gracious and ungrateful as a prince, and an adept in using the talents, weaknesses, passions, vices and even virtues of others for his purposes.

Also, he had a fine theatrical intuition and was a natural-born stage-manager of the highest order. Barni venerated these more solid qualities.

Urbino had started League No. 1 and got deservedly cast out of it. He had then been mainly instrumental in forming League No. 2, and had likewise proved so turbulent, domineering, and generally insupportable, that he was exorcised out of that also. He had, of course, established a newspaper in connection with each movement.

Notwithstanding these facts—most likely by reason of them, for Ecumea is wonderfully wrong-headed—he still had great influence in the island. He controlled a number of ferocious journals, had many admirers, and a considerable following of ecclesiastics, adventurers, enthusiasts, and general hangers-on. Besides, not a few prominent men—legislators, councillors, and others—in connection with the rival Leagues, who desired to be safe whatever might happen—trimmed and time-served, and made him understand that they were really, in spite of temporary appearances, his faithful adherents.

Señor Urbino had heard of the intentions of the two Leagues which had so gracelessly seceded from him.

Barni expressed great surprise; in fact, he almost overacted his astonishment—since it was he himself who had caused the secret information to be indirectly communicated to him.

The Urbino had no suspicions; on the contrary, he boasted to Barni of the ubiquity of his friends and the perfection and power of his own ramified and sleeplessly-watchful system. Whereat, Barni murmured reverence and admiration—and winked to himself.

They talked business.

The Urbino was not going to be left behind, or left out, in the struggle for popularity, and subscriptions. The world should see and hear that he was not yet a played-out volcano. Indeed, he meant to show that he was only about to begin. His previous efforts and achievements were only those of his political apprenticeship. He had now learnt something—especially with regard to the men who might, and might not, be trusted as leaders of Ecumean aspiration—and avidity.

(To be continued.)

JOHN BULL'S OPEN LETTER.

To the Right Hon. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.
Prime Minister of England.

DEAR "C.B."—

And so you are Prime Minister! Who would have thought it? It is but as yesterday that you were the most frowned at and the most laughed at man in politics. No one took you very seriously—with the exception, perhaps, of Rosebery. You were the champion Little Englander, the friend of every country but your own, the nominal, titular leader of a battered and a broken party. You had a "pawky humour," they said, whatever that may be; but you were altogether out of touch with the national sentiment. There was nothing Imperial about you. You were just old C.-B.—that was all.

And now you are First Lord of His Majesty's Treasury, Prime Minister, by Patent Royal, and head of the biggest party ever known to Parliament—with a majority so huge that for the moment all opposition in the Commons is reduced to absolute impotency.

Thus, have you been transformed into Parliamentary Autocrat. You are Czar of all the Commons.

Such a transformation requires explanation. Is it difficult to find? Not your most devoted admirer would pretend that your present proud position is the result of any transcendent genius or personality. Amiable, cultured, humorous, without an enemy and without a want—you were just the man to step into the breach when Rosebery broke down. So when, at that historic gathering, you were asked to "lead" the party, everyone said it was a convenient and a "safe" solution of the difficulty. But no one foresaw the present position. No one imagined that twice within ten years would the country go mad—once for War and once for Peace.

Having thus had greatness thrust upon you, it is not to be expected that all in a moment you would rise to its responsibilities—and we have not been disappointed in this respect. We admit that you are somewhat handicapped. For in the opinion of an ever growing number of people the game of party politics is played out—they think that Disraeli's description of the Tories as an "organised hypocrisy" is equally applicable to the Liberals. Speaking candidly, we are bound to say that up to the present you have failed to dispel this impression.

Now, having come to the new Parliament with this abnormal majority at your back, what, so far, have you done with it? You remind us of nothing so much as a nervous billiard player. You are always playing for safety. You are afraid to go out for a stroke. On the Trades Disputes Bill you gave a miss in baulk. On the fiscal question you endeavoured at the very beginning of the game to pot your opponent. On the education question you have monotonously simply gone for cannons. On Chinese Labour you have undoubtedly "mis-cued," and more than once we have been sorry to see you putting on just a little too much "side." What we want, Sir Henry, is a good strong, all-round game. The scoring up to the present has been painfully slow.

Do you remember that meeting at the Albert Hall? There was no talk then about "requiring time"; about the estimates for next year "having been practically settled;" about allowing twenty thousand more Chinese Coolies to come to the mines. No! the filthy thing was to stop; extravagance in national finance was to cease; there was to be more work for the "under employed" and less for the "over employed"; the land was to become a treasure ground for the people instead of a pleasure ground for the landlords—a new era of peace and prosperity and progress was about to dawn. And now you plead for time! You cannot even find a warm meal for the shrivelled and starving body of the State child; but you can wrangle for weeks, and vote another million to secure the reversion of its soul! As though God wanted hungry angels sent to him! There is money for the "President of the Council," but not a penny for the man who gives his time and toil to Parliament. No money even for the postages of men on public business. What are the stamps on a dozen or twenty letters a day to a man with the princely salary of £2 10s. per week. Let me illustrate it. What would you say to being taxed £1,000 a year for the expense of your correspondence with constituents and others? Here are a handful of little reforms—little in the Parliamentary sense, but *so* far reaching in their results—which, surely, your Government might have managed for us whilst larger measures were in contemplation. They would have been an evidence of good faith.

We can wait a year for such revision of taxation and reduction of expenditure as shall give us Old Age Pensions and other social reforms, but *do* let us have something to go on with. The Education Bill? *That* surely could have waited. It might have come last, and then we could have tacked the House of Lords on to it, and have gone to the country with a battle cry that would have stirred men's blood. But it would have had to be a real Education Bill—and the cry would have been not, as it is to-day, Church *v.* Chapel, Prayer-book *v.* Bible, but PEOPLE *v.* PRIEST AND PEER. Which rings most true? Alas! the opportunity you have missed! The Trades Disputes Bill? That isn't yours at all. It is *ours*. And in less friendly hands it might have meant your undoing.

But six months old, your Government has been twice humiliated. On this Trades Disputes Bill you have had to consent to accept in Committee an amendment which, if carried on the second reading, would have been tantamount to rejection, and in Chinese slavery you have, somewhat ungallantly we have thought, sheltered yourself behind the youngest member of your ministry. His loyalty has not been less than his ability. A less able man would have brought you down. That "terminological inexactitude" saved you. Do you remember how nearly Birrell blundered when he described those coolies in the picture as simply "in a *pensive* attitude"? The idea that this poster, which had done such yeoman service at the election, was really representative of a small band of earnest Confucians, wandering in meditative mood through the silent cloisters of Johannesburg—well, it was just too much for most of us.

We were startled the other night to read in big letters on the Contents bill of an evening paper "Dissolution Rumours." Do you, with all your sense of humour, appreciate the irony of it? Ah, and the tragedy of it too! Be careful, Sir Henry, lest, of your very strength, you fall. Sitting, as we do, in a remote corner of the House, many strange things reach our ears. If we attempt to indicate their purport, we must fall back upon your own historic phrase—"*Enough of this fooling.*"

As you are strong—be brave. WAKE UP!

Your obedient servant,

JOHN BULL.

JOHN BULL'S "CANNED" FACTORY.

JOHN BULL'S AUCTION.

JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN AND ODDMENTS.

By Herbert Vivian.

Sessions House, Fleet Street, June 16, 1906. The Court being assembled and silence commanded, the Commission of oyer and terminer was again read. After which the Lord Northcliffe was brought to the bar and commanded to hold up his hand. The indictment having been read, Mr. Justice Bull announced that, the Sessions House being required for a public auction, the trial stood adjourned to a more convenient day.

Mr. Bull then left the bench and ascended the rostrum.

"I have been instructed," said he, "to offer for sale a job lot, consisting of an automatic figure called Joseph Chamberlain, his coat of many colours and a number of his unredeemed pledges, together with Mr. Pearson's parrot, several megaphones, a pearl button and a bankrupt stock of Moorish jewels. The parrot is somewhat mouldy and has a limited vocabulary, but the Chamberlain truly deserves to be called unique. Among his chief accomplishments is that of thinking imperially, which is much more difficult than many of you may imagine. Hitherto its practice has been confined to dwellers in lunatic asylums, barloafers and other serio-comics, but in this case it has been reduced to a fine art. It is a harmless pastime, for it means nothing, and at the same time it affords great fun for winter evenings. With a little patience, I verily believe that this curious little creature might also be taught to drink parallelogrammatically, to ponder in whiskers, and to perform many such diverting feats. As he possesses neither whiskers nor imperial, this is the more amazing. Who will give me a start? Sixpence, did I hear? Why, his coloured coat alone is worth that sum. Somewhat garish, do you say, sir? Well, you will always find him ready to change it at a moment's notice. When new, it was a brilliant revolutionary red; it is now true blue (more or less), and no man knows what it will be.

"I can also warrant him as the possessor of an exquisite wit. Speaking at Highbury last week, he excited roars of laughter by alluding to his son as 'the inferior person who has preceded me'; and he caused unprecedented hilarity by declaring, 'I am not member for East Worcestershire; if I had been, I should have given you a burst of eloquence that would have taken the top off this tent.' One point of this jest is that the orator now speaks with a still small voice, only audible with the aid of a strong megaphone even at close quarters. A tent would needs be as asthenic as tariff talk to be blown off by him. But he is sufficiently well fortified with gas to blow the cork out of any imperial pint.

"Another charm of his wit is fecundity. It breeds and multiplies as readily as any rabbit. Take the case which I have just quoted. On the very day next following the convulsion of Highbury, this lot was again on the stump. His son also delivered a speech. With irony no less transcendent than his originality, that chip of the old block exclaimed: 'This is not my show. Had it been, you would have witnessed a burst of eloquence such as you have never had in the annals of West Birmingham.' The 'Daily Mail' described this ebullition as 'neat,' but that is surely faint praise for so sparkling—nay, for so side-splitting—a scintillation. It must have been a touching scene when the great Chancellor and the great Mafficker unbent so freely and so far.

"Other attractive features in this lot are his taste and urbanity. The first gentleman in Birmingham (where gentlemen are rare), he may be described as a good judge of gentlemen, just as an Irishman was once styled amiably by him 'a good judge of traitors.' So sure is he of himself in this particular that he is ever ready to teach manners to a Prime Minister. Indeed, his assurance is so great that he might without difficulty be induced to instruct dukes in deportment, ducks in natation, and monkeys in morals.

"But perhaps his noblest quality is a conspicuous patriotism. Even if he cannot always be a little gentleman, he never ceases to try to be a patriot. His success in that direction may be gauged by the South African war, colonial preference (which is to say, preference over the mother country), a generous expenditure of other people's money and other people's lives, as well as by ingenious proposals for taxing foreigners and simultaneously excluding their taxable goods. This is pure patriotism, for, like charity, it begins at home—namely, at Birmingham, where small arms cannot become a dying industry in time of war. What bid do I hear? Five shillings? A crown for Mr. Chamberlain! I am sure he would like to have one, but it must be an imperial one. Remember that he is accustomed to the National Anthem at his meetings; that he speaks in the first person plural, like mediæval royalty.

"Another expression of his patriotism may be discerned in his attitude towards political parties, now generally admitted to be the curse of the age. By using parties as stepping-stones of their dead selves, he contrived to aggrandize himself, which is only another way of saying that he succeeded in exalting the Empire; for have we not his own imperial word for it, that he and the Empire are one and indivisible? What he has said he has said, sometimes one way, sometimes another. And every party, which he has utilised, was subsequently destroyed by him. Thus was the State spared great dangers, while he loyally obeyed the poet's injunction, 'To thine own self be true'; like another statesman in the 'Biglow Papers,' he 'always stuck to one party, and that was himself.'

"Someone asks what shall be done with him after purchase. I suggest that he would make a decorative pet, especially if he were given rope enough. He might then apply it to the usual purpose. May I say thirty shillings? Note that he has been trained to the House? Remember how modest and unassuming he is, how unspoiled by adulation. Whole suburbs have been pulled down to make room for the enormous tent wherein he might condescend to speak. Special steamers and trains have been run from all parts of the Potteries to convey hysterical audiences, who shouted, 'Good old Joe!' to an accompaniment of metrical clapping. Yet he has remained as cold, as impassive, as cynical as though he were indeed a Brummagem impostor.

"Thirty shillings I am bid. No advance on thirty pieces of silver? Going, going—GONE!"

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THE WOODEN HEADS OF OLD ENGLAND.

II.—THE BANKRUPTCY LAWS.

By B. FRANKLIN, JUNR.

In my article last week I showed that the Act for the Abolition of Imprisonment for Debt in England had been turned into a dead letter by the united efforts of the creditor and the County Court judge; that, in fact, over eleven thousand persons had been imprisoned last year for non-payment of debt, more than double the number that had been imprisoned twenty years before, and that the rate of increase was rapidly rising. I showed, further, how the attempt on the part of the legislature to make it easier for the debtor to pay, by allowing the judge to order him to pay in instalments, had been turned into an instrument for the further oppression of the debtor by allowing the judge to commit him to prison several times for non-payment of instalments of the same debt. It is evident, then, that unless the legislature abolishes imprisonment for debt altogether, except in cases of fraud, and absolutely does away with the present system of judgment summonses and the pretence of imprisoning for contempt of court, Great Britain will remain as the only civilised country which still believes in and practises this form of chattel slavery. That the same England which boasts of being the first nation to abolish negro slavery should really be the only nation in Christendom which still enslaves her own people as punishment for unpaid debt would be a hideous anomaly if it stood alone, and if it were not merely a proof that in the nation of shopkeepers indigence is in itself a crime.

Whatever part of the penal code we take, we shall find that in Great Britain the punishments are more barbarous than in any other civilised land. The countrymen of Howard are content with this sad and shameful pre-eminence, and the very people who set an example to the rest of the world of sympathy with the sufferings of the lower animals are notorious throughout Europe for the awful severity with which they punish not crime alone, but poverty and misfortune. I doubt whether the system of imprisonment for debt is so disgraceful a blot on the judicial system of Great Britain as are the Bankruptcy laws.

Mr. Chamberlain's Bankruptcy Act of 1883 was hailed on all sides in the Press as "a colossal achievement": at length "a business man" had come to make laws for us, and all would be well. The pæans of praise soon died away and a saner judgment gradually established itself. The anomalies and absurdities of Mr. Chamberlain's Act can only be realised by those who have studied it; imagination could not invent such stupidities. Let us take one or two: once a receiving order is made the debtor must pass his public examination, must, in other words, be publicly shamed as a bankrupt, though the day after the receiving order is made he may have paid all his creditors twenty shillings in the pound. He has paid everyone; he owes not a penny, yet he is pilloried in the Press as a bankrupt, and has to appear to pass his public examination as a bankrupt! Even Mr. Chamberlain should be proud of this provision of his Act, it seems to me.

A short time ago I read of a case that was still more amusing. A receiving order had been made against A; on reflection, two of A's largest creditors withdrew their claims, and one of them advanced money to the debtor sufficient to pay all the remaining creditors 7s. 6d. in the pound. This composition was accepted by all the creditors; it was not accepted by the Official Receiver, who reported that it did not appear to be "in the interest of all the creditors," and especially of the two who had given up their claims. The Court overruled Mr. Pedant, the Official Receiver; but the pedants exist, and are still to be found in power in Carey Street.

But an Act, it may be said, is not to be judged by its anomalies or by the stupidities of the people who administer it; it must be judged on broad lines, by results. Well, judged on these lines, Mr. Chamberlain's Act, in spite of its inquisitorial powers and fearful penalties, does not appear to have worked much good. In 1882, the year before the Act was passed, the sum total of the bankrupts' liabilities, plus the gross amount of debt in liquidation by arrangements and in compositions, amounted to just over £19,000,000, and £5,500,000 was paid to creditors. In the year after the Act was passed, in 1884, the whole amount of the bankrupts' liabilities was just over £14,000,000, and £4,000,000 was paid to creditors.

Two facts emerge from these figures: the first is that the debts have diminished, in other words, that the severity of the Bankruptcy Act has had its usual effect in bringing about private compositions and arrangements which never come before the Court—anything but a good result; and the second is that the proportion of debts realised is about the same, though the amount is less: the creditors get slightly more in proportion than they had previously obtained. If we study all the figures from 1882-1884 to 1902-1904 these results still maintain themselves. The amounts of bankrupts' liabilities that were £19,000,000 in 1882, in 1904 have sunk to £7,000,000, of which about £2,750,000 was repaid to the creditors; and whereas the number of debtors in 1882 were 9,000, they fell in 1884 to 4,000, and in 1904 they were only 4,500. The severities of the Act are unmistakable; its advantages are not very apparent.

It is the severest Bankruptcy Act in Christendom. Just as no other nation admits imprisonment for debt, so no other nation first subjects the debtor to the shame and humiliation of bankruptcy and then refuses to discharge him, but follows the debtor with pains and penalties, and seizes upon his earnings for the benefit of his creditors until he is discharged. In every other country the shame and humiliation of bankruptcy once passed, the man has a clean sheet and can begin again. In England this is not the case; unless he can pay at least ten shillings in the pound his discharge is pretty sure to be suspended for years, and the law does its utmost to turn the unfortunate debtor into a pariah, a pauper, or a criminal. And these penalties, to a great extent, fail of their purpose, and simply force the debtor to evade and defraud. The undischarged bankrupt, as a rule, conceals his earnings, and the Court has no means of ascertaining them.

When shall we find a law-giver in England who will follow the French example and keep the shame and stigma of bankruptcy proceedings for traders and merchants, while giving artists and men of letters and professional men immunity from this humiliating punishment? The French jurists rightly say that the professional class and artists and writers are not seeking primarily for money, are of advantage and benefit to their fellow-men beyond and above their remuneration, and consequently should not be subjected to the pains and penalties which traders, who only seek for money, ought to face.

But it is worth while to look at the matter from a wider standpoint, and to ask ourselves, is it wise or expedient or just that we should all pay taxes in order to keep up courts of law, judges, prisons, and the whole paraphernalia of so-called justice in order to assist creditors to collect their debts? For we must never forget that three-quarters of all the courts in this kingdom are being kept up solely for their benefit.

Now let us ask ourselves why the creditor gives credit. First of all, he doesn't give credit because of the good looks of the debtor or out of any kindness to him. As a rule, the retail tradesman gives credit for one of two reasons: either because he wants further accommodation from his bank, which he can get on showing his books and the debts owing to him, or he gives credit because by giving credit he can get the unfortunate debtor to buy more than he (the debtor) wants or would otherwise purchase. In the first case it is manifest that we have no business to assist the creditor in order that he may obtain money from his bank, and in the second case it is absolutely wicked that we should assist the tradesman in getting the customer to purchase more than he needs. In both cases the desire of the tradesman is immoral; and it is worse than immoral, it is stupid on our part to tax ourselves in order to aid him in his immoral and degrading practice.

Of course, there are cases in which the tradesman gives credit out of humanitarian motives; but these are so rare, and the amount at stake so slight, that they need scarcely be taken into account. Besides, in this case, the tradesman himself should be allowed to play philanthropist to the end.

I put it before Englishmen in all seriousness that if their whole trade was brought to a ready-money basis it would be a sounder trade and better for the people at large. They would then be able to discharge nine-tenths of their lawyers, and judges, and tipstaffs, shut up three-quarters of their jails and half their lunatic asylums, and by getting rid of all this hungry army of people engaged in non-productive labour, they would enormously increase the efficiency of the community as a whole.

But if this is too drastic a change, it is at least certain that if imprisonment for debt were abolished and the bankruptcy laws mitigated to a humane twentieth-century level, there would still be far too much credit given in Great Britain. Judging by the analogy of the United States, credit would still be easy to obtain; but in Great Britain the habit of running-up bills is engrained in the social life of the people; it is regarded as an aristocratic custom, and so will be used beyond right or reason for thousands of years to come.

SHAMS.

I.—THE KEELEY INSTITUTE—(*continued*).

By Anti-Humbug.

We now come to the evidence collected by the Institute, and vouched for by the Committee, which is published in support of the claim of the Institute to effect the permanent cure of drunkards. Evidence of this kind is necessarily *suspect*. A man who has gone to an Institute to be cured of alcoholic or drug inebriety does not like to publish his experience to the world under his own name. He is not to be blamed for that unwillingness, but anonymity detracts greatly from the value of his published statement. Nobody doubts that genuine letters of the kind can be got from persons who have been to the Institute. What has to be shown to satisfy men accustomed to weigh evidence, is that these letters are accurate representations of fact, and anyone who reads them must feel that they require corroboration. Some of their statements are so extraordinary that it requires the strongest independent evidence to enable one to credit them. Now, at the end of these testimonials, there is the following paragraph:—

> "The Chairman of the Standing Committee kindly consents to answer any inquiries by letter. Reverend Canon Fleming, St. Michael's Vicarage, S.W."

Sceptical as to the value of some of the letters, a gentleman determined to invite the Canon to answer certain questions, as he offers to do, and we give below a copy of his letter, so that our readers may judge for themselves whether it was a reasonable letter, or one which left the Canon any excuse for failing to fulfil his undertaking. The letter is as below:—

Richmond, Surrey, May 21, 1906.

Reverend Sir,—

In the pamphlet issued by the Keeley Institute, and containing the reports of the London Committee of Investigation, of which you are Chairman, it is stated by the Secretary that you have consented "to answer any inquiries by letter." I therefore ask you to answer the subjoined questions. I have no thought of applying for admission to the Institute, nor have I any acquaintances who desire to test its treatment. I am interested simply in the question of how inebriety may be cured, but am incredulous as to the success you claim for the Keeley treatment. Still, I have an open mind, and if you can satisfy me upon the points this letter raises, I shall do my utmost to make known the merits of the Institute to all who are interested—and who is not?—in the cure of drunkenness. The questions I respectfully submit to you are as below:—

1. I observe that Mr. Robinson Souttar is no longer upon the Committee. Mr. Souttar was the only member of the Committee who may fairly claim to be an expert on the subject of cures for drunkenness, and I should like to know the reason why he retired from the Committee.

2. The Committee cite a number of cases of men who have been cured by the Keeley treatment, and you say that the original letters are in its hands. I invite you to allow me, or my representative, to see the original of the letter quoted on page 3, and following the notice of the eleventh annual meeting. I also ask you to give me, or my representative, permission to call upon the writer, and the gentleman referred to by him, on page 4 of the same pamphlet.

3. In a preface to another pamphlet signed "Leslie E. Keeley," Mr. Keeley states that he treats "each case on its individual merits." I am informed, and I invite you to deny, if it can be denied, that the medicine given to the patients is sent over from the United States from the parent Institution, sealed, and that this medicine, changed in no way, is given indiscriminately to all patients, there being no difference whatever in the composition of the medicine in the various bottles.

4. With regard to the persons examined, I ask you to explain what steps are taken by the Committee to ensure that the men sent up for examination are not selected cases arranged for by the management without prior consultation with the Committee.

This letter is in no way confidential, and, should it be necessary, I shall consider myself at liberty to use any reply I may receive from you.

Yours truly,

V—— O——.

The Rev. Canon Fleming, B.D.

If Canon Fleming had answered the questions put in this letter frankly and satisfactorily, he would have gone far to disarm criticism. He has left it unanswered; nor is this a singular instance of his unwillingness to carry out his promise of reply. We have knowledge of several persons who have addressed Canon Fleming with the desire to obtain information respecting the Institute, but in no case did the Canon reply.

Not content with communicating with Canon Fleming, the writer of the above letter, impressed by the fact that the one expert of the Committee in recent years had retired from it, wrote to Mr. Souttar a letter, in which he said:—

> I am investigating the methods of this Institute, sceptical, I confess, as to the value of its treatment, but anxious, if it be possible, to satisfy myself that it does in the way of cure what it claims to do.

and finished with the following:—

> I find that you have retired from the committee, and I should be greatly obliged if you would tell me whether your retirement was influenced by dissatisfaction with the methods of management, or growing doubt as to the efficacy of the cure.

To this Mr. Robinson Souttar replied as follows:—

24, Penywern Road, Earls Court, London, S.W.,
May 24, 1906.

Dear Sir,—

I am in receipt of your letter of 21st inst., enclosing copy of one sent to Canon Fleming with reference to the operations of the Keeley Institute. Though I have left the Committee of Investigation now for a good while, I have a high respect for the gentlemen upon it, and could not say anything to vex them.

I left the Committee because I disapproved of the wording of the advertisements.

There is much to be said in favour of the short treatment system for the cure of inebriates. It supplies a want. Of course, you know that the Keeley is now only one of several institutions working on the same lines.

There is more in the treatment than mere medicine. The system has been elaborated by specialists, and at times produces striking results. But it is only suitable for a certain class of case, and it is easy to exaggerate its merits.

Faithfully yours,
Robinson Souttar.

V——. O——., Esq.

We commend this letter to the believers in the Institute. Naturally enough Mr. Souttar does not want to say anything that will give pain to a body of gentlemen from whom he has separated, and whose good faith—with a possible exception—no one desires to question. But he has to answer a straight question, and he does not burk it. He does not want to "vex" the Committee, but he left it because he "disapproved of the wording of the advertisements"; in other words, because statements were made, and are being made, in its advertisements to which as an honest man, and an expert, Mr. Souttar was unable to assent. He says that the Institute supplies a want, but truth compels him to add that the system "is only suitable for a certain class of cases, and it is easy to exaggerate its merits." If this is not damning with faint praise, we do not know what is. But we go much further than Mr. Souttar. We do not say that there have not been cases of permanent cure that may be traced to the Keeley treatment. It is quite a mistake to assume that every testimonial published by a quack is bogus. "Quackery," says Dr. Scholfield, in "Unconscious Therapeutics," "would soon come to an end and fade away before the spread of knowledge and the decay of superstition under the fostering care of the School Board, and our higher educational system, but for one thing. It can show real cures, both undeniable and numerous, in spite of the vast number that may not bear scrutiny." We do not doubt that if a man goes to the Keeley Institute anxious to pull himself together, with a profound belief in the efficacy of the cure, it may make him better for a time. Whether it ever effects a permanent cure is much more doubtful. There is nothing in the evidence submitted to prove it, and there is this great and vital difference between the ordinary quack prescription and the Keeley treatment—the one is harmless, the other baneful. The aloes, ginger, and soap in Beecham's Pills; or the aloes, rhubarb, saffron, glauber salts, and pepper in Holloway's Pills; or the aloes, colocynth, and rhubarb in Cockle's Pills; or the cascara, rhubarb, liquorice, and gelatine in Bile Beans; or the ipecacuanha, lactucaria, squill, liquorice, tragacanth, and sugar in Keating's Cough Lozenges; or the citric acid, with potassium and sodium bicarbonates in Lamplough's Pyretic Saline, may do no particular good in cases where strong faith is absent, but then they do little or no harm. But with the Keeley treatment it is very different. As often as not it wrecks the patient. The injury may not be visible when he comes out. Usually it is not. But it is appallingly apparent so soon as he takes to drink again, when he presents the appearance of a man shattered in brain as well as in body. It is this which makes resort to the Keeley treatment such a serious matter, and which adds enormously to the responsibility of men who vouch the harmlessness as well as the success of the treatment.

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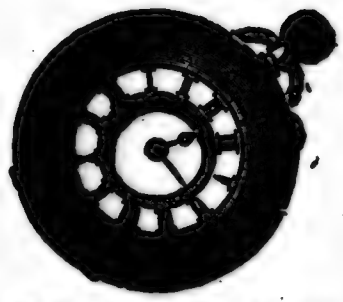

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BULL'S-EYES.

From Our Own Lanterns.

It has been stated that £40,000 has been realised by Kubelik as a result of the 147 concerts he recently concluded in America. The way some people scrape through life is remarkable.

By Universal consent, Kubelik is the greatest living fiddler. He commenced his musical career in the cradle, and though his father was a market gardener at Misle, he himself preferred to have other strings to his bow. Therefore, he started out young, with a fiddle under one arm and an impresario under the other. He has been growing hair ever since; and though he has given large quantities away, there is no diminution in the crop. He married a Countess, and in due course his twins became the wonder of the world, their arrival being reported in all the newspapers. His age is twenty-six, and evidently he is still making money.

I am glad to see Sir Edward Clarke back in his native land, where he has such a splendid talent for getting into hot water with his party. In the Law Courts Sir Edward is known by his wig, and in the street by his suit, which may always be regarded as a promise of summer. He might have been on the Bench long ago if he had not been such an independent party. "Instead of which"—well he is a shock to Joseph and a worry to Arthur. At all events he *was*.

Mr. John Burns is rapidly living down the scoffers of the Tory party, what is left of it. He is obviously earning his £2,000 a year, being in charge of the nation on Friday afternoons, and sometimes on other occasions. Also, he has acquired the graceful Balfourian art of putting his feet on the table of the House, in lieu of a mantelpiece. Though only forty-eight, he wears white hair, which is the work of a merciless Providence, and not that of the Unionists. By trade he is a statesman, and when he is not at work, takes life at the laugh. He has never been seen in drink, for he neither looks upon the wine when it is red, nor the cigar when it is Havana. His only puff is himself; but he is a thorough good fellow.

"*Medicine Ball*" is the name of a game invented by his physician for Mr. John D. Rockefeller, the eminent metal dealer. It seems a new game, but probably Mr. Rockefeller is in need of it. This may be the game which has developed in him the desirable digestive apparatus for which he recently offered a large quantity of dollars. Mr. Rockefeller rubs along in artificial teeth and a wig, and he will tell you that his greatest blessing in life is that he always went to Sunday-school. But Standard Oil is believed to have run Sunday-school pretty close.

Mr. Carnegie—he who has made millions of precious metal—has broken out in a fresh place, according to all accounts. From time to time people who have made millions give advice in the newspapers and magazines to people who haven't. In this respect, every millionaire on earth has been prolific. Mr. Carnegie's most recent outbreak in this line seems to have been to advise the artists at a Charity Concert on the "Celtic," to get rich "by making use of the newest machinery."

Meanwhile, this eminent metallurgist sticks to his gospel that the man who dies rich dies disgraced. So he ladles outmillions to support the great novel industry, disseminates church organs, and fills the poorer Scotch with the higher culture; and if they are lucky, even the hungry, the unemployed, the halt, the blind, and the lame may get a share of the good things by-and-by. Mr. Carnegie is Scotch, and possibly may drink it, plays golf, but should have started younger, and at Skibo looks well in knickerbockers. He hopes his end will be peace, and in that respect he has my best wishes.

"*Joe*" recently described Lord Milner as "one of the greatest assets of the Empire." Some say the "t" was superfluous.

But really, whenever I hear of Joe praising or blaming anyone I am compelled to think of Dryden's masterly portrait of the famous George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, in "Absalom and Achitophel":—

> "Railing and praising were his usual themes;
> And both, to show his judgment, in extremes;
> So over-violent or over-civil,
> That every man with him was God or devil."

I remember, too, the further lines:—

> ". . . . . then sought relief,
> By forming parties, but could ne'er be chief."

I don't mind a tax on food a bit. Not if it comes from Chicago. When I can't get Protection I'm for Retaliation. I would tax anybody's food to save his digestion.

Talking of table delicacies, the startling assertions of Dr. Cooper, M.P., seems to suggest that people who live in glass-houses should not throw bones. The doctor says that many English establishments which place prepared meats on the market would be shut down to-morrow if the public could only see inside. Here is a chance for some enterprising daily or evening paper. Whatever the harm's worth, it might do some good worth.

Eight million pounds is the amount of money Mr. Ogden Armour—he of Chicago—has made out of animals and enterprise. His motto is believed to be, "Always make tin when you can."

Another remarkable worker in the precious metals, Mr. J. D. Rockefeller, recently landed in England, and is still believed to be somewhere about. His reason for coming over is that the climate of America has disagreed with him of late, being too hot. The difference between Armour and Rockefeller is that one sells food unfit to eat, and the other sells oil unfit to drink.

Mr. Balfour's enthusiasm for the piano continues unabated He even allows Mr. Chamberlain to play with him.

According to Mr. Chamberlain, another General Election may take place next Spring.

> *Oh*, Mr. C.,
> You'll never be
> Accepted as a prophet;
> The mantle it
> Will never fit,
> And so, kind sir, please drop it.

By-the-bye, the Unionists are preparing for victory by discharging many of their election agents. Methods differ.

I propose that the Liberals should prepare to avoid defeat by discharging some of their Leaders.

With regard to "Seymour Vandeleur," by Colonel Maxse, C.B., some say that C.B. stands for Copy-Book, just as C.M.G. for Colonial-Made Gentleman.

If America were not a Republic we should suggest that a peerage be conferred upon Mr. Ogden Armour under the title of Lord Preservus.

On dit that Lord Hugh Cecil is anxious to return to Parliament. This is between me and Hugh.

I am told that at the office of the "Daily Mail," the staff are trained to bow to the receiver when they address Lord Northcliffe through the telephone.

Latest Intelligence: Mr. Pearson's parrot is suffering from the pip.

FROWSY FANATICS.

By Jim Crow.

A certain candidate at the last election had expressed himself with considerable freedom during a long and distinguished journalistic career. His phrases, some of them fifteen years old, were ruthlessly disinterred from files in museums and used against him on hoardings and leaflets with remorseless pertinacity. The most deadly of all, the most difficult to explain away, was a reference to "frowsy fanatics." All Free Church Councils, Nonconformist bodies, Citizens' Leagues, and other phonographers of the still small voice were diligently exhorted that the cap fitted them. Praises of the passive resister, compliments to the backbone of England, were used alike in vain. There is nothing so dangerous, so adhesive, so obstinately long-lived, as an apt catch-word. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman knows this to his cost. So does my friend.

Now there are very many Nonconformists who are models of charity, good sense, and common sense. But there are also frowsy fanatics, and they belong to every creed. Some of them are direct lineal descendants of those old Puritan kill-joys who only denounced bear-baiting because it afforded pleasure to the spectators. Such fellows find pretexts galore for their crusades, but it is the world's cheerfulness which they really aspire to subdue. Thus all alcohol is maranatha, not merely because it sometimes begets intoxication, which begets improvidence or crime, but because it may gladden the heart of man. Thus the stage is accursed, not so much because some of its acolytes are Nonconformists with regard to Mrs. Grundy's rule, but rather because people who are not playgoers imagine that it entertains. Thus, again, sport is denounced, not merely because it sometimes induces gambling, but because it takes men out of doors and exhilarates them in body or in spirit.

Sport, is, indeed, the prime windmill whereat these queer Quixotes most persistently tilt. Cocking, which gratified the birds and improved their breed, at the same time affording spectators an example of pluck, has been banned and relegated to secret hiding-places, where the rules of the pit are less punctiliously observed. Prize-fights, which improved the human breed and afforded the same lesson on a grander scale, have succumbed to penal laws; even the gloves are viewed askance by apostles of effeminacy. Pigeon-shooting has been pronounced illegal by a judge, and that without consent of Parliament, but merely as a compliment to the fancies of old women of both sexes. Coursing, particularly that of rabbits, because it distracts the multitude, is instantly menaced. The hunting of otters, stags, and even foxes is viewed with a very evil eye by the unctuous and sedentary who, like Mr. Kipling, prefer the pursuit of bugs.

To recapitulate: the main argument for joy-killing is that one thing may possibly lead to another. Dancing may lead to cuddling, football to broken shins, music to broken hearts; in fact, as the old woman said when she wept beside the well, "you never know what may happen." Meanwhile, your frowsy fanatic forgets that temptations often strengthen character. He also forgets that even the most stringent legislation can never remove every temptation. The prohibition States in America have multiplied cases of drunkenness; Sunday closing has led to Sabbatical orgies ere now. If betting on horse-races were put down, small punters might take to the bucket-shop and fare infinitely worse. In countries like France, where there are no manly sports, crimes of violence are far more numerous than they are with us. You cannot drive the rising generation from the fields straight into the free libraries. Stop football and you will fill the streets with Hooligans.

Where the frowsy fanatic is most cruel and most illogical is in his attempt against a healthy use of Sunday. He would prevent all games, all outdoor exercise, all enjoyment of God's gifts on the one day when the millions have a respite from their toil. Because the Jews were taught to observe certain practices on the seventh day Christians are to be mewed and dragooned on the first. And this, although the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath; although Sunday is not a Sabbath, any more than a day of rest is necessarily a day of sloth.

Remember, too, that the Sabbatarian superstition is not even a dogma of Protestantism. In every country, save Britain and the lands she has colonised, Protestants unite with all other Christians in welcoming Sunday as a precious occasion for mental and physical recreation after six days of toil.

FOOD FROM THE SKY.

By a Scientist.

Scientific achievements are sometimes amusing; and a great mistake is made by those who think they are only intelligible to experts. The language of science, rather than the science itself, is that which seems bewildering. Quite lately a new industrial process has been evolved from a scientific discovery of the most profoundly subtle order, but the discovery, as well as the process, are perfectly within reach of any acute understanding. The process has to do with a new method of manufacturing the chemical salts called nitrates, which are used in fertilising soil destined to grow wheat. Now a few years ago patient investigation showed that the wheat-eating population of the world was increasing so rapidly that the agricultural regions of the world available for growing wheat would soon fail to meet the ever-increasing demand. So science predicted a partial bread famine, for a period about twenty-five years hence, always subject to the possibility that in the interim some process would be invented by means of which nitrates could be manufactured.

Hitherto they had been only found in a few places, where they had been manufactured by Nature. Chili, in South America, was the principal source of their production. But the nitrate beds in Chili are within measureable distance of exhaustion. Were we going to be put on short rations of bread, or was chemical science going to rise to the occasion? Chemistry has been equal to the occasion—supplemented by an electrical discovery, which at the first glance seems as little connected with bread-making as with the birth-rate of Mars. A certain Norwegian Professor ascertained that if an electric arc-light is subjected to a peculiar magnetic influence, the flame spreads out into a disc with a much larger surface than that it originally possessed. Now the heat of the electric flame has the property of causing the two gases that compose the atmosphere, oxygen and nitrogen, to enter into a chemical combination and form nitric acid. An old-fashioned electric arc would not do this freely enough to yield nitric acid in commercial quantities. The new kind of electric disc presented so much greater a surface to the gases, that results were obtained on a correspondingly larger scale. Once get your nitric acid, and nitrates can easily be formed by its combination with lime or other common substances.

Thus at once the great problem described above was solved. Science had come to our rescue, and the threatened wheat famine stands deferred for an indefinite period. The nitrogen and oxygen of the atmosphere exist in such abundance, that, roughly speaking, about eighty tons of it hang over every square yard of the earth's surface. People with a taste for long multiplication sums will be able to find out how much is suspended over every square mile. But that quantity at all events will be sufficient to guarantee all the nitric acid required to promote the growth of wheat for as long as the human race is likely to last. Indirectly therefore science has restored a method of feeding humanity which has hitherto been supposed peculiar to the early families of the children of Israel. Manna is not descending ready-cooked, but at all events chemistry has shown us a method of obtaining food from the sky.

Norway, the country in which the discovery that has made this process possible was first worked out, has proved also to be that in which the industrial process finds its most natural home. Its waterfalls provide cheap power in such extraordinary abundance, that electricity can be developed at a cost so far below the price charged for it in European cities that the quantity known as a Board of Trade unit, which costs us something in the neighbourhood of sixpence, costs the Norwegian manufacturer the fiftieth part of a penny. And it is interesting to find, in view of the wide differences of opinion that exist as to the wisdom of such legislation, that the Norwegian Government has at once "protected" the new industry. Legislation is in progress in Christiania designed to make it impossible that foreigners shall come and plant factories in the neighbourhood of Norwegian waterfalls. Their limitless horsepower is only to be at the service of Norwegian capital, so that, for the present, Scandinavia reserves for herself the exclusive privilege of being the channel of distribution for the manna of the future.

UPSIDE DOWN

is the house if the floors are not covered with Li-nola. Such a house is rendered topsy-turvy if the floors are covered with oilcloth or carpet, because a great amount of cleaning labour is necessary; the housewife must clear out the furniture to properly scrub the oilcloth, and carpet must be taken up and beaten at regular intervals if desired to keep it free from dust. Li-nola needs no scrubbing and harbours no dust.

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AMONG THE BOOKS.

Last week I had to write in this column of two good books, the nett result of six months' reading. Since then I have read perhaps a dozen books, and only one of them can by any stretch of language be called extraordinary, though two or three more than repay the reading.

"Beyond the Rocks."

"Beyond the Rocks," by Elinor Glyn (Duckworth and Co.), is not as good as "The Visits of Elizabeth." It is not as pretty and quick and saucy. But the view of life in it is just the same; all the aristocrats are tall and slight, with beautiful faces and charming familiar courtesies. That they have neither minds nor morals does not seem to be against them in Mrs. Glyn's eyes. The *nouveaux riches* are all podgy and fat, vulgar and stupid—much below the level of well-trained servants.

This weird view of life is Mrs. Glyn's. But the love stories she writes are pretty little love stories enough, and are conducted, in contempt of probability, to a happy end. To kill time nothing could be better than "Beyond the Rocks."

"The Cuckoo's Egg."

The second novel on my list, "The Cuckoo's Egg," by Mrs. Forestier-Walker (Digby, Long and Co.), is altogether better work. The book almost deserves to be called extraordinary. Mrs. Forestier-Walker has a rare understanding and power of painting characters. The bad girl in this book, "the Cuckoo," is realised intensely and presented to us with uncommon fidelity in her grace and beauty, in her generosities, her lyings, her curiosities and sensualities. If Barrie had only been able to paint a woman like this, his "Little Minister" might have been memorable. But parts of the book do not convince me. Does a girl of careful upbringing, eighteen years of age, let a man kiss her the first time she meets him, in fact, within half an hour of meeting him? A year later this same girl sees a man bathing and falls in love with him at sight, and says to herself—"Life shall tell me something. I will know what it means to care body and soul." And then, though there is nothing in the young Englishman, the bather, "but the ordinary plainly-dressed, clean-skinned young man that England and her public schools turn out by the thousand," though he is not the man of men to her, she goes further still with him, in fact, she goes as far as possible.

The pair have been out in a boat together from Viareggio, and he is exhausted pulling back against a sudden storm; while dragging the boat in, he gets struck on the head and stunned. Constance pulls him out of the water and up to the little bathing hut; he is still alive, although horribly cold; and this is how Mrs. Forestier-Walker goes on:—

"She (Constance) rose to her feet, looking down on the closed eyes, then hurriedly, with nervous, tremulous fingers, she tore and pulled at his wet things till she got them off. One look she gave at the still white figure lying cold and inert in the flickering pale light, then she piled the soft silk blankets on him, tenderly raising his head and slipping soft cushions under it. She knelt beside the low divan and laid her lips on his. 'How cold—how horribly cold!' she said aloud. With a quick movement, she rose, closed the door, and blew out the little oil lamp.

"Noiselessly she let all her wet things fall on the wooden floor, with a sigh she crept in beside him, and put her bare arms round him, drawing his head close against her."

And then come five stars—*five!*

All this is not credible to me as done by a girl, an unmarried girl who had never before tasted of love. It looks to me as if Mrs. Forestier-Walker had grown emulous of the enormous success of Victoria Cross and had determined to show that she could be just as bold as her sister-novelist. She has been as bold, or bolder; for Victoria Cross has passion, and is thereby justified. The sense of passion vibrates in her pages; her heroines grow credible to me through this alone, more than credible, indeed, they impose themselves by this most human quality—the desire of the eye and lust of the flesh.

But this gift has been denied to Mrs. Forestier-Walker; she is unable to convince us of the passion in her heroine, and accordingly, when her heroine falls, she falls through vice, and not by heat of blood. We have the heroine's curiosity well shown, but no passion, and curiosity does not seem to be enough to carry a girl, brought up as Constance was, to such lengths.

By this, I do not mean that Mrs. Forestier-Walker is not as well equipped as Victoria Cross in qualities needed for the writing of novels. She is, in truth, even better equipped. I feel sure she could have made Constance credible to me in any action if the action had been native to Mrs. Forestier-Walker. But here she has not made it credible; she has degraded her gift to follow after strange gods—a born worshipper of Minerva, why should she prostrate herself before the altar of Venus? But, because of her power of drawing contrasted characters, I hope for better things from Mrs. Forestier-Walker; I shall look for her next book with eagerness, though this book has been eminently interesting and has passed the time much more agreeably than "Beyond the Rocks."

AMONG THE THEATRES.

MRS. PATRICK CAMPBELL IN "THE WHIRLWIND."

It is impossible to speak of London theatres, even in the shortest space, without noticing the fact that Mrs. Patrick Campbell has taken the Criterion and can once more be seen in London. It is a pity that she chose "The Whirlwind" in which to make her re-appearance. The play is a good acting play; it moves quickly and has scene after scene of good acting quality; but it is too hopelessly stagey and conventional, both in atmosphere and character-drawing—the aristocrat contrasted with the self-made man in the old way, which was old the first time it was employed, because it is taken from the outside and is of the surface, superficial.

"The Whirlwind" as a play does not bear talking about. In Paris, where certain conventions such as gambling and the so-called code of honour and the duel are still elements of life as they have ceased to be elements of life in London, the play was just possible; in London it is impossible, it is an insult to one's intelligence and one's sense of reality; one yawns at it mechanically.

The adapter, Mr. Harry Melvill, might easily have lifted the whole play to a higher level and made it more interesting and vivid to us. The hero is a well-born gambler who is in love with a married woman, and who one night pursues his bad luck and loses a sum he is unable to pay; he proceeds to use some trust-money in order to free himself, and so comes to leeward of the law. It would have been easy to have given a love-scene at the beginning of the play, and to have shown in the love-scene how the gambler had grown tired of stolen interviews and chance kisses, and had determined to put everything to hazard in order to get enough money to run away with the woman he loves and make a fresh start and live a new life. And this higher motive would have lifted the whole play; it would have explained and justified Mrs. Campbell's desperate efforts to get the money to free her lover; it would have made it more possible, too, for him to have accepted her assistance, and thus heightened the suspense of the audience. But no, the adapter slavishly follows his author and is content with the lowest motives; his gambler gambles simply to supply himself with luxuries and to keep himself in society, and he kills himself at the last out of the same unworthy selfishness.

The play leaves a bad taste in the mouth, and Mrs. Patrick Campbell could easily have done better; for Mrs. Patrick Campbell is one of the few actresses, or, for the matter of that, actor managers, in London who can judge a play by reading it. She knew what "The Whirlwind" was before she staged it, and she must have deliberately subordinated her contempt of it as a play to her liking for it as an actress. It cannot be denied that the play gives her fine opportunities for acting, and she takes advantage of them to the full. But the note of her acting, as indeed of all great acting, is sincerity, and the play is too insincere to give her a chance, and so she seemed to me a little more mannered than usual; there was a sense of effort in her work; sometimes even she had to pump the emotion up, and that is not the Mrs. Patrick Campbell one wants to see. The play did well enough for Réjane, for Réjane is French and, being piquant rather than pretty, suggests passion rather than love, and in other ways, too, belongs to the stage and not to the heights; but Mrs. Patrick Campbell at her best is with Duse and the stars, and should not cheapen herself to meretricious vulgarity. There are fine things for Mrs. Patrick Campbell to do, where she can wear pity and fear as a garment, and not self-debasement—altogether, an unsatisfactory evening in a thin house.

F. H.

RACING NOTES AND IDEAS.

By W. Lotinga.
("Larry Lynx" of "The People.")

Brighton.

This is another of the now very few "open" race downs, a blend of the past with an addendum in the new stand, and a few arrangements of the present. It is run by the Corporation, and, under Mr. H. M. Dorling's management, their bigger asset—certainly more remunerative and less costly to maintain than the trams. There was a suggestion two years ago to accept the offer of the Hurst Park Executive to take over the spring and summer meetings for a term of seven years, with carte blanche to alter and to do as they desired for an annual consideration of £4,000—twice what the races had hitherto yielded to the town. But since Mr. W. C. Manning's improved "rake" in the ground and additional brick stand, the profits have increased, culminating in a record at last week end's fixture. As a race-course, the White Hawk Hill is an accentuated Epsom—inside berth means 10lb., and first off in the sprints is usually first home. 'Tis assuredly not a course to gamble upon, for some horses can't even canter on its switchback gradients, and most extraordinary upsets have occurred here—more good men, 'tis said, being ruined at Brighton than anywhere. The sea view from the stands, over the undulating downland and intervening valley, is superb—the town of old Brighton lies in the hollow on the right, the sea forms a three-sided boundary. Brighton's populace is mainly a transient one, so with time-killing and holiday-making the main quest, everybody goes up to the races. The journey from town is so expeditious that many "do" Brighton daily from London, but the proper enjoyment only comes from staying there, at the "Met." or Royal York, so that the pleasantries of the early morning dip and ride or drive up and down the incomparable King's Road can precede the excitement of the sport itself. And is not "Dr. Brighton" a traditional benefiter of mankind? The race ground was legated to the town by the late Mr. William Kemp, after whom neighbouring Kemp Town is named. It has been improved, but the best running track would be obtained by starting at this end, and having the stands where the 1½ mile starts now take place—exactly the opposite extremity of the course. There was some talk of it, and of using the present grand stand as a town gymnasium.

History Repeats Itself.

Horses for courses is a stereotyped cry, but proved time after time. Some animals cannot even trot downhill, others, due to their build or weaknesses behind or in front, their style of action, or any one of many influencing matters, need certain kinds of "going," left or right hand courses, particular jockeys' handling, etc., etc. We have seen complete failure attend a horse for months, or the year through, until he scored again on the scene of his previous triumph—probably as was the case last week with Neyland, in the very race which he had gained twelve months earlier. The backers' proverb is to be on horses at Epsom that win at Brighton, and vice versa; to follow animals that traverse successfully similar flat galloping courses, as Newmarket and Gatwick; or that relish a severe finish, such as Ascot or Sandown provides. There is no golden rule for backing winners at racing, but, subservient to luck, there can be many sensible resolutions and reasonably wise deductions.

Starters' Mounts.

Those who know the old-time print of "The First Steeplechase on Record" would be reminded of it when seeing Mr. Hugh Owen, the official starter at Epsom's last meeting, canter to post, wearing a tall white hat, upon a blood 'un carrying his quarter-sheet. The gee-gee thus nattily trimmed up was Maintop, a moderate jumper of last winter, in Sir Henry Randall's colours. The horse now belongs—although incredible as he is not "docked"—to Jack Coleman, the famous Epsom vet., who loaned the hack to the Executive. Thus the starter had a smart and a speedy mount—reminiscent of a canter in Rotten Row—but all meetings do not provide such a comfortable ride for their officials. Mr. Coventry used to have a real "liver-shaker" upon a diminutive skewbald cob at Kempton. These hacks are frequently only borrowed for the meeting, "Snip" Ripley or Jack Horlick usually supplying one for Sandown or Hurst Park, the return generally being honorary membership or an annual pass.

Racing Prejudice.

There is nothing easier than being a critic—to disagree with opinions expressed, to—figuratively—train horses at home or ride a race on the stands. But I have rarely seen more bad riding than these last few days, or better than Randall's on Orwell and Hardingstone at Epsom. It is a figure of racing parlance that all jockeys ride well when they win, for the backer speaks through his pocket. Although Maher has won all the big races of late—and he and Randall are most successful horsemen, there is, or was, a prejudice against them both at Epsom and Brighton, it being said that they "take no risks," and "can't come down hill." Surely this last Epsom irrefutably disproved both. Maher always rode one sort of race—waiting for the last little rise—but it didn't always quite come off.

The Grand Prix.

France's richest stake for three-year-olds is distinct from their Derby, which event many, on this side, actually believe it to be. Its value is much in excess of the monetary worth of our blue riband, but much more money is added to both branches of sport in France than here, and racing in its entirety is in a much more all-round flourishing condition. No records are obtainable regarding the total amount wagered on the course upon our big events, but something approximate to a hundred thousand pounds passed through the Pari-Mutuels over Sunday's Grand Prix. The appearance of English competitors—not a common occurrence nowadays—in itself attracted many from this side, while 99 out of every 100 Englishmen present—or remaining at home—backed Spearmint. The majority of those even witnessing the race made their investment prior to crossing, as it is a strange fact, probably due to being unaccustomed to its use, that we do not take kindly to what is termed "putting our money into the box." As an anomaly Spearmint's price for a place was within a fraction the same as the winning rate. We in England only have one Derby day as an almost universal picnic; the Frenchmen make every possible opportunity and similar function a holiday and an outing. Thus do they say we take our pleasures sadly.

Chasing a Stepping-stone.

Major Eustace Loder is unquestionably quite one of Fortune's favourites, for who but one blessed by the gods would find a Pretty Polly—much less a Hammerkop, a Game Chick, a Star Shoot, a Spearmint, or a Chestnut Sunday within six years? Like so many who have subsequently become leading patrons of the Turf, Major—then Captain—Loder began his racing with jumpers—Covert Hack, The Shaker, and even platers that Tom Cannon trained come to mind. The King himself, the late Mr. H. McCalmont, Sir James Miller, his brother, Sir John, Mr. "Jubilee" Benzon, the present Duke of Westminster, Mr. W. B. Purefoy, Mr. W. M. Singer, Mr. A. M. Singer, Colonel Hall-Walker, and his three brothers, Sir Peter, Mr. Reid, and Mr. Barclay Walker, Mr. G. P. Huntley, Colonel E. W. Baird, in fact half the owners of the prominent silks and satins of to-day's turf had their jackets first sported "between the flags."

Major Loder is the first military man to win the Derby since Colonel Towneley's success with Kettledrum in 1861—forty-five years ago. Mr. Peter Purcell Gilpin—who learned all his racing with Michael Dawson at the Curragh, and gained all his experience upon a useful chaser-hunter, which he won several races with when a young subaltern—is similarly the first "amateur" trainer to claim a Derby and Grand Prix success. A gentleman jockey has yet to succeed in any classic event—Mr. George Thursby has been thrice second—Mr. Billy Bevill, the Kempton Clerk of the Course, and a Mr. Wm. Robinson, a solicitor, are the only other amateurs to have even had a ride in the Derby.

Castle Irwell.

The Manchester Cup is hardly as prominent in a racing sense as was the case fifteen or twenty years back, when it was run on the old course at New Barns. It has suffered, in conjunction with other similar races, in consequence of a multiplicity of valuable handicaps, and the creation of injudicious, unprofitable "ten thousand pounders." Moreover, it is now neither a long distance race nor a more fashionable mile dash, its present course—1½ miles—being an unhappy medium, for the easy course almost brings it within the scope of the speedy sprinter, and yet is no good to the recognised stayer. It would hardly be credited that throughout our whole racing year there are only some thirty events—cups, handicaps, and everything else—run over a two-mile course or upwards. I refer, of course, to flat racing. In addition to its change of venue, the Manchester Cup has had its distance and conditions repeatedly altered, but is even now the richest handicap of the season, as far as actual added money is concerned.

An Unlucky Race.

The success of Bachelor's Button as a raging favourite would tend to popularise the race, as does the victory of any good horse or top-weight, but the volume of business done upon the event was so small that our friends the enemy admit they did "little harm" over it. The just now invincible D. Maher gained his first notch in the race, which has been an extraordinarily unlucky one for jockeys. Taking the records of only the last twenty-one years, I find that only three winning horsemen are still riding, and all of them, M. Cannon, K. Cannon, and H. Randall, have scored within the past six seasons. Of the others, Geo. Barrett, Fred Barrett, W. Bradbury, T. Mullen, and J. Calder are dead; F. Finlay, F. Alsopp, J. Watts, jun., H. Luke, jun., J. Woodburn, and W. Glover are practically never heard of in active connection with racing; F. Bullock, last year's winner, has returned to the colonies, and J. Childs and T. L. Miller are riding abroad. T. Cannon, sen., and G. Chaloner, are now trainers.

Make and Shape.

Horses run in all shapes, and the good-looking ones are not always the best. Grand mare though Sceptre was, she was somewhat on the "shelly" side, particularly ran up light in her quarters and was narrow in front. Pretty Polly, a more powerfully built mare on a smaller scale, is not altogether what will be termed perfection in a thoroughbred; and as to true symmetry, size, reach, power, and blood-like proportions, hardly a horse treading the turf at the present moment can equal Bachelor's Button, whose attractive golden chestnut colour enhances his "picturesque" appearance. The Manchester Cup winner has been for several seasons a regular, and somewhat inconsistent performer on our racecourses. He is erratic, but at his best a really useful although not a great horse. When he wins, his class, colour, and carriage attract the eye. On days such as at Lingfield last year and at Newmarket this season, when the long odds laid upon him were ruthlessly upset, he is unnoticed and disparaged. He is one of the very many high-class handicap and successful performers bred in Ireland, and bought subsequently for racing here.

Behind our Neighbours.

The fact that this has been the period of France's big jumping events suggests how very much ahead of us our neighbours are in regard to the general run and class of their 'chasing and hurdling. In value more is added to one day's sport in France than is often the case in a month during our recognised N.H. campaign. We have no event—not even the Grand National—which is worth 50 per cent. of Auteuil's steeplechase or hurdle races. The fact that France can so successfully continue its jumping throughout the year, while we utilise only the most unpropitious and unsatisfactory season, is an old cry, which we are as far off as ever from alienating. Executives speak with truth in saying that they cannot give huge money prizes without the equivalent in big gates, and in the winter here nothing other than meagre attendances and returns seem possible.

From November to March mainly the actual professionals or regulars (in other words, the "needy and the greedy") form the nucleus of those at jumping meetings. Furthermore, increased values in stakes invariably seem to fail in attracting, for time after time is the chief handicap at a meeting the biggest failure as to entry, acceptance, and field. No real attempt has ever been made to promote and popularise summer steeplechasing. The immediate, off-hand reply, would be that "the ground is too hard," and the risks too great, as evidence of which during the last three weeks of jumping in May no fewer than three steeplechase jockeys were killed. But, lacking Nature's supplies, there are artificial means of making the going perfect, or absolutely adequate for this purpose—as was seen in the most beautiful turf provided at both Kempton and Hurst Park these last few days, due to their irrigation schemes and efforts in carrying them out. As in the adage, "money makes the mare to go," so will increased stakes attract better class horses, the competition between which is irresistible to the ordinary racing public. Before many years we are certain to see summer jumping meetings popularised and successful in England, and it only needs the experiment properly launched to prove it.

A Few Hints.

The present is a quiet, split-up week end, the calm prior to Ascot's turmoil. Although not quite a stayer, Borghese got the Chester 1¼ miles, so should be able to stay the easy course for Friday's Lewes Spring Handicap, and carry the pretty, popular colours of Sir Henry Randall to victory. And at Hurst Park, on Saturday, Corriecrian seems almost too palpably certain—we know these paper certainties—to take the Open Plate. Those who desire to speculate—and who does not do so at Ascot?—will have ample opportunity next week. Pollion will be given another opportunity in the Mile Selling, and whatever Batho runs in the Two-Year-Old Selling will be worth attention; In view of Spearmint's recent performances, every breeder is after Wargrave, and this honest, good horse will undoubtedly shortly go to the stud.

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The exchange may be provided with as many 100-line machines as may be required, the several machines being inter-connected, and the automatic connecting devices transfer calls from one machine to another. The machines are driven by electric motors, or by a line of shafting, and the various connecting switches, which are all rotary and contain no reciprocating parts, are brought into play by electro-magnetic clutches.

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The subscriber, having set the discs to read the number he wishes to call, turns and lets go a handle, which sets in motion an interruptor or impulse-transmitter. The result of these manœuvres is that the machine first selects the line calling, and then transfers it to one of the connecting devices, which selects the line wanted and completes the connection. This operation takes from 10 to 15 seconds, according to the number called.

THE MACHINE DOES THE REST.

The calling subscriber then rings his correspondent and the conversation proceeds in the ordinary way. The conversation being ended, the replacement of the two receivers releases the connecting device, and everything is restored to normal. The Lorimer machine has been developed in America, and has only lately been brought to a commercial stage. It is in use in one or more exchanges in Canada.

PROGRESS OF THE INVENTION.

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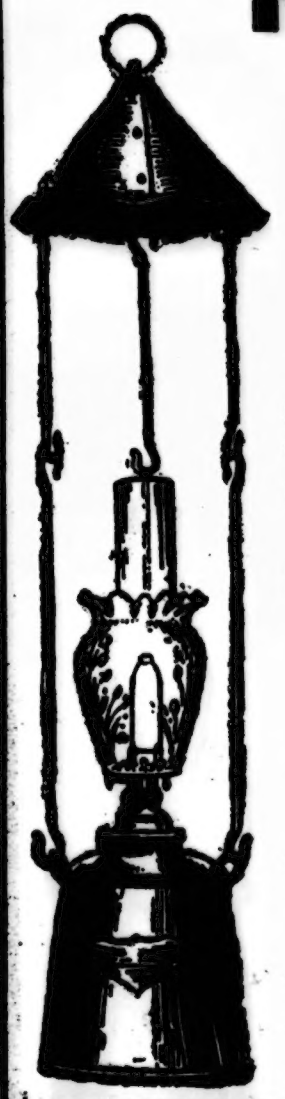

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